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POLITICAL PROGRESS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY THE LATE
THOMAS MACKNIGHT

Author of "Thirty Years of Foreign Policy," "History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke," "Ulster As It Is," Etc.

REVISED AND COMPLETED

BY

C. C. OSBORNE

THE LINSOTT PUBLISHING COMPANY
TORONTO AND PHILADELPHIA

W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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PREFACE.

Mr. Thomas Macknight, who began, but unhappily did not live to complete this volume of "The Nineteenth Century Series," was born in Durham in 1829. He was educated at King's College, London, where he graduated with distinction and was awarded the first prize for an Essay on the Historical Plays of Shakespeare. Among the professors of the College at that time was the Rev. J. F. Denison Maurice, one of the most liberal minded theological writers and influential social reformers of his day. To his wholesome influence Mr. Macknight owed much in the formation of his mind and character. During the impressionable years of his College career he acquired not only knowledge, but toleration of judgment, sympathy with the opinions and difficulties of his fellow-men, and an ardent interest in the many movements then springing up for ameliorating the condition, and promoting the happiness of the people. The future Liberal writer and Editor could not have fallen under a more potent or more beneficent influence. In addition to his high scholarship and breadth of opinion, there was a geniality and personal magnetism about Maurice which were peculiarly attractive and winning, and enabled him to create a deep impression upon those with whom he came in contact. For his professor Mr. Macknight learned to entertain a high regard, which increased rather than diminished in future

years. In his consistent advocacy of social and political reform, and the "truly catholic charity" of his religious views, the pupil was worthy of the master, who must have watched with singular interest the development of a mind which from the beginning showed evidence of vigour and originality.

On leaving College Mr. Macknight devoted himself to political history and literature. His facility as a writer was apparent from the first. His style was easy and at the same time forcible. His thought clear, his power of illustration considerable. Before he was twenty-five he published "A Literary and Political Biography of the Right Honourable Benjamin Disraeli, M. P.," which attracted favourable attention. In 1854 appeared "Thirty Years of Foreign Policy: a History of the Secretaryships of the Earl of Aberdeen and Viscount Palmerston"—an exposition and defence of the policy that led up to the Crimean War.

A more ambitious work followed. As Maurice had influenced his earlier years, so Burke dominated his later development. For the character and writings of the great Statesman Mr. Macknight conceived an enthusiasm, which ended only with his life. In "The History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke," of which the three volumes were published between 1856 and 1860, he produced a work of great ability, and abiding value. For many years it remained the standard authority, and at the time of his death the author was engaged in completing a new edition of it, and an annotated edition of Burke's works, to which several years of patient research had been devoted.

In 1863, Mr. Macknight added to his already well established reputation by the publication of "The Life of Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke," which was

deservedly praised as an impartial and able review of the chequered career of the ambitious Tory statesman and writer of the eighteenth century. The *Saturday Review*, entirely opposed to the political opinions of the author, in praising the work, said "Mr. Macknight has made himself well acquainted with all that is to be known of Bolingbroke and his career, and on the whole takes just and well-grounded views of the matters which he handles." This spirit of fair dealing never deserted Mr. Macknight, and was one of the secrets of the large influence he exerted as a writer. His motto might well have been "Be just and fear not." At many critical periods in British politics he felt and wrote strongly, but he never wilfully did injustice to his opponents by misrepresenting their views, he never abused his power by indulgence in personalities, or in times of victory or defeat allowed political rancour to sour the sweetness of his temper, or political passion to warp his judgment. Of how many writers who for more than a generation have been constantly, almost daily, called upon to decide between conflicting parties in the state, can the same be truthfully said? We fear the number is not large.

In 1866, Mr. Macknight accepted the editorship of *The Northern Whig*. This daily newspaper is the chief political organ of the Liberals in the north of Ireland. It had always occupied a position of importance. Its previous editor was Mr. Frank H. Hill, who resigned his post to take charge of *The Daily News*, the chief Liberal paper of England. But under the direction of Mr. Macknight the circulation and influence of *The Northern Whig* were greatly extended, and upon all questions affecting Ireland the opinions it expressed were quoted by the London

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newspapers. For thirty-three years, down to the date of his death on the 19th of November, 1899, Mr. Macknight controlled the fortunes of this great Irish paper with uniform success. When we remember the stormy times through which Ireland passed during those years, the task will not appear a light one. But Mr. Macknight had a sound and steady judgment, which, combined with his large-minded toleration, enabled him to grasp the reality, and, while expressing his opinions with force and brilliancy, to avoid giving wanton and unnecessary offence to political opponents. In paying a generous and eloquent tribute to his work and memory, *The Northern Whig*, of November 20th, said "he displayed that unerring instinct for fact and truth, that capacity for piercing through the apparent to the real conditions of great political and social problems, which is one of the rarest, as it is one of the most precious, gifts of an editor."

In politics Mr. Macknight was a strenuous and consistent Liberal, the champion of every wise reform for promoting the moral, social, and political improvement of the mass of the people. From the day he became editor of *The Northern Whig* to the end of his life, he rendered valuable service to the cause of progress, and to the party with which he was associated. The Liberal victory of 1868 in Ulster was in no small measure due to his influence; and this was gracefully acknowledged at the time by Lord Dufferin, and other Liberals, by the presentation of a handsome silver salver, tea and coffee service, and purse of sovereigns.

Mr. Macknight was no mere party politician. He was an independent thinker, to whom the welfare of his country and of the Empire were of the first impor-

tance. In common with many other Liberals his political integrity was to be submitted to a severe test. A personal friend and ardent admirer of Mr. Gladstone, the time came when he had to make the momentous decision, not only for himself but for the newspaper of which he was the guiding spirit, whether he could follow the great leader in his Home Rule policy. Mr. Gladstone's surrender to the forces of Irish Nationalism was a great shock to Mr. Macknight, and to all the Ulster Liberals. Trusting to his memorable assurances that he would uphold Imperial unity, the Ulster Liberals had supported Mr. Gladstone with devoted loyalty. Their sudden betrayal was all the more hard to bear. If *The Northern Whig* had gone over to Home Rule, the result politically would have been very serious. But like the majority of the more thoughtful and educated supporters of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Macknight refused to abandon the great principles of Liberalism at the call of any leader. He pledged himself, and the newspaper entrusted to his charge, to stand by the cause of Imperial unity, which in that crisis meant the cause of political and civil liberty. Subsequent events justified his action.

Though a strenuous politician Mr. Macknight was personally beloved by men of all shades of political and religious opinion, and in 1890, on the completion of the twenty-fifth year of his editorship, he was presented with a Celtic shield of silver, a valuable gold repeating keyless lever watch, a cheque for a handsome amount in the Ulster Bank, and an Address, subscribed for as a mark of esteem by all parties. In the course of the address it was recorded that his "extensive and accurate information," his "penetration and foresight," his "fairness and undoubted courage," had

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combined to secure for his "political judgment a large measure of general confidence and respect." In 1896 he published "Ulster as it is," in which a very striking and instructive picture is given of the condition of the most important province in Ireland.

Mr. Macknight's responsibility for what appears in this volume ends with the Tenth Chapter, except for the letter addressed to him by Mr. Gladstone, which appears at the end of the Eleventh.

C. C. OSBORNE.

16 St. Edmund's Terrace.
London, N. W.

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POLITICAL PROGRESS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

RETROSPECTIVE: END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

EDMUND BURKE died about midnight of Saturday, the 8th of July, 1797. The eighteenth century, as will be seen, was then closing, under very different auspices from those which attend the end of the nineteenth. That there has been a very great advance in all that can be called political progress will scarcely be disputed by anyone. Politics may be said to embrace all that relates to the government of mankind in a social or civilized community. In a state of barbarism, generally represented by a despotism, there can be no politics, as the word is now understood, embracing the highest interests of mankind, and extending from the government of a city, to the promotion of the welfare of a great community both in a National and Imperial sense.

On looking back over the last ten years of the eighteenth century the eye is first struck with the great French Revolution, followed in the very last year of that century by the establishment of the Imperial despotism under the first Napoleon. The bright

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2 POLITICAL PROGRESS OF THE CENTURY.

hopes with which the opening of the States-General were regarded on the 5th of May, 1789, were soon overclouded. Little more than a month afterwards the Tiers État formed themselves into the National Assembly, and on the fourteenth of the following month of July the French Revolution may be virtually said to have commenced by the destruction of the Bastille. In the autumn the National Assembly decreed that the title of the King of France should be changed to that of the King of the French; the property of the clergy was confiscated, and the emigration of the nobles began. Throughout the world, and especially in the United Kingdom, the French Revolution was hailed as almost the noblest event in the history of mankind. France, after having so long lain under a relentless despotism, was at one bound supposed to have made an enormous advance in political progress. Before, everything had appeared dark to those who compared the reigns of three successive French sovereigns with English constitutional freedom under William and Mary, under William himself, and the succeeding sovereigns of the house of Hanover.

The great majority of the British people, the great majority indeed of civilized and enlightened people throughout the world, rejoiced at the French people having, as was thought, thrown off the heavy yoke of the Bourbon despotism. Nearly all who believed in political progress, may be said to have taken on this question the same side. But not a month after the fall of the Bastille, we find Edmund Burke writing, to his friend Lord Charlemont, these remarkable words: "The spirit it is impossible not to admire: but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner. It is true that this may be no more

than a sudden explosion: if so, no indication can be taken from it; but should it be *character* rather than accident, then that people are not fit for liberty, and must have a strong hand like that of their former masters to coerce them. Men must have a certain fund of moderation to qualify them for freedom, else it becomes noxious to themselves and a perfect nuisance to everybody else.”*

This will be admitted to be a remarkable forecast. The problem thus presented in a letter to the patriotic Irish nobleman, may be said more or less to have perplexed those who have watched political progress in France during the whole course of this century. It will constantly arise in the course of the events at which we may glance as they roll on. Even now, at the close of the century, can we say that the problem may be considered to have been fully, and satisfactorily solved? Can we say, standing on the very threshold of the new century, that political progress in France has been all that it was sanguinely expected to be just after the Bastille fell? Can we say, even after a hundred and ten years, that the French Revolution is yet complete?

It was natural, however, that the great and sudden change of the old French despotism, into what was at first believed to be a constitutional monarchy after the English type, should be hailed with delight by nearly all friends of political progress. The future was as yet covered with a cloud; but it had, at all events to many eyes, the brightest gleams of light. Writing sometime afterwards to his friend, Fitz-

*Hardy's "*Life of Lord Charlemont*" edit. 1810. Page 322. *Charlemont Manuscripts and Correspondence*, Volume 2. Page 104.

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patrick, Charles Fox, the then leader of the Opposition, exclaimed of the French Revolution: "How much the greatest event it is that has ever happened in the world! And how much the best!" Even Pitt, Prime Minister of what had become a Tory government, looked on what was occurring in Paris with approving eyes. It used to be said, that when France was satisfied the world was tranquil. M. Thiers, at a much later time, did not hesitate to declare that it was the mission of France to radiate ideas for the universe. The first of the constitutions of Abbé Siéyès was hailed with applause, even by practical English politicians, who were accustomed to the workings of a free government and a gradually developed constitution. We find Fox, for instance, describing what was considered the first French constitution after the Revolution, as "the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty, which had been erected on the foundation of human integrity, in any time, or country."

Abbé Siéyès, who had to try his hand at so many French constitutions, stated to M. Dumont that Polity was a science which he thought he had brought to completion. Many Frenchmen, many of the French legislators at any time, had the same idea, until in the pursuit of it they began to cut off one another's heads. Then they, and those who had been their admirers in the United Kingdom, and in many lands, began very reluctantly to reconsider their opinions. They had to confess at last that the Revolution, like an unnatural mother, was devouring her own children.

The guillotine may be said to have been erected on the Rights of Man. These represented a contradiction in terms. As we now read the Rights of Man, they

seem a string of commonplaces, which all people can accept on the principle of equality. They all logically follow from the first, that all men are born free and equal, and that social distinctions are purely conventional. But it is upon the application of this principle, and the others that are deduced from it, that civil society, and all that is embodied in political progress, may be said to depend. The Rights of Man have been compared by Madame de Staël, and others, to the English Bill of Rights, and to the American Declaration of Independence. But there was between them a wide difference. The Bill of Rights was an assertion of rights which it was maintained had long been enjoyed, and were part of the constitution. The Bill of Rights was the embodiment in a legal form of the Declaration of Rights, understood to have been drawn up by Somers. It added, that "the Lords and Commons do claim, demand, and insist of all and singular the premises as their admitted rights and privileges." Nothing whatever was said about natural rights. The assertion was of legal rights, the rights, not of Man, but of Englishmen. It was sought to deal with abuses, which in the course of time had become associated with an established government, handed down from many generations,—from Magna Charta in the reign of King John, if some of those rights and privileges had not come down from an even earlier time. Those rights were claimed as an inheritance.

The same may be said with respect to the Declaration of American Independence. This has been called "the most memorable public document that history records."* In the introductory sentences, in

*Tucker's *Life of Jefferson*, vol. 1. p. 90.

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which the Deputies of Congress affirm it to be self evident "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and so forth, there are general expressions about natural equality, which may be regarded as the forerunner of the declarations of the Rights of Man passed by the French National Assembly. They may be considered, indeed, to have a French and not an English origin, being evidently suggested by the Social Contract of Rousseau, which had been published at Amsterdam in 1762, fourteen years before the American Declaration of Independence. But while these general expressions remind readers of the Rights of Man, as affirmed by the French National Assembly, soon after the beginning of the great Revolution, they are followed by a long recapitulation of the treatment the colonies had received from George the Third, as justifying the decisive step taken on the 4th of July, 1776. They were the Rights of Englishmen, which were asserted to have been deliberately and persistently violated. British constitutional rights were trampled underfoot, as well as what are assumed to be the principles of natural equality, which the historian David Hume, a great admirer of the old French Monarchy, had asserted to be engraven on the hearts of all men. Burke pointed out this significant sentence of Hume's: but though the great Irishman had not a good word to say in favour of the French Declaration of Rights, he never said a word against the American Declaration of Independence, which, under the circumstances, he evidently considered quite justifiable.

The colonies which threw off their British allegiance, did so, as is well known, with much reluctance. There was some difficulty in getting the Declaration of Independence carried. Franklin on this subject used even the language of regret. The descendants of the English Puritans, who took so active a part in establishing the great Republic of the United States, were very different men from those who, in the concluding year of the eighteenth century, were engaged in the attempt to set up the French Republic. They looked at politics from different, almost from opposite points of view, separated by what Coleridge called the whole diameter of being. That certain of the new American citizens, and many Englishmen, may have shewn sympathy with the French Revolution while it was proceeding, was natural enough. But they were not disposed to make common cause with the French Republicans. They did not think of proclaiming war against all kings. George Washington was, indeed, complimented by certain members of the subsequent Directory for "the hatred he bore to England." This was pointed out, at the time, as contrary to the fact: it has long been acknowledged not to be the fact. No person at the close of this century would assert anything so absurd. Washington had the manners, the feelings, and even the prejudices, of an English gentleman. So had many of those who co-operated with him in freeing the colonies from what they had been made to regard as a British yoke by George the Third's narrow-minded, and oppressive obstinacy, assisted by those who called themselves the King's friends, though they were really their country's worst enemies. It is scarcely necessary to say that the New England

colonies, and the others which ultimately joined them, formed both their State Governments, and their General Government, on the English model. Republican as they were in form, there was much that was Conservative, and even Monarchical in their spirit: and notwithstanding that the United States have received so large a number of colonists from other countries, the influence of this spirit is still felt among them.

The nominal alliance of Prussia and Russia, as shadowed forth at the interview between the two sovereigns at Pilnitz in the August of 1791, did not check, but rather intensified the course of the Revolution. To the Monarchical League, formed of the various sovereigns, professedly, at the beginning, to obtain the freedom of Louis the Sixteenth, might be applied what the unfortunate Emperor Joseph had in former years said of himself: "Here lies the Emperor Joseph, who failed in all his undertakings." The invasion of France precipitated events. As Danton said, the head of the King was the first cannon ball discharged at the allied Powers. The first apparent success of Prussia really made matters worse. It called out the patriotic and military spirit of all who had declared war against sovereigns, and of all who were not prepared to see their country partitioned. It was subsequently said that it never was a war of alliance: there was no system, no common object. Dumouriez, supposed to be the Girondists' general, appears to have acted, at a great crisis in military operations, very much as Bazaine was afterwards accused of doing: that is, of acting as a politician for dynastic objects, and not merely as a commander, bound to defend his country under all circumstances against a foreign enemy.

A few months before the Convention at Pilnitz there was supposed to be a peaceful revolution in Poland, and a constitutional monarchy at last satisfactorily established. This was stated by Burke, in the "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," to be "so far as it had gone probably the most pure, and defecated public good which ever had been conferred upon mankind." At the conclusion of the paragraph on this subject, we find the great statesman and philosopher exclaiming: "Happy people, if they know how to proceed as they have begun! Happy prince, worthy to begin with splendour, or to close with glory, a race of patriots and kings, and to leave

A name which every wind to heaven would bear,
Which men to speak, and angels joy, to hear."

It is sad to remember how those enthusiastic anticipations, of the most eloquent and far sighted defender of settled government and of Monarchy in those days, or in any days, were contradicted by facts. A few months after Burke wrote these words, the Polish nobles, discontented with the loss of privileges which had been so much abused, formed what was called the Confederation of Targovica, and instigated the Russian invasion. Resistance was put down by the united troops of Russia and Prussia, and then, with Austria as their ready accomplice, the second partition of Poland was consummated. This was followed by the third partition three years afterwards. Such sovereigns could scarcely consider themselves superior to the French Jacobins, to the subsequent Directory, or to Napoleon, who by his promises to reconstitute the Kingdom of Poland induced the Poles to rally round him as their military

champion. When the first partition of Poland was accomplished, it was prophesied that this was the road by which the Russians would enter Germany. The result, during a considerable part of the nineteenth century, was undoubtedly to make Prussia the humble ally of Russia, and even Austria a convenient instrument. It was a great drawback on the political progress we have to record. These partitions of Poland, more than half a century afterwards, were called by Lord Palmerston the dangerous legacy of a successful wrong. Such, with all respect to Mr. Carlyle's memory, they were. They were the forerunners of other great international crimes. Their spirit is perhaps not yet extinct.

Mr. Pitt and his Government were reluctantly drawn into the continental coalition against Jacobin France. Whether, under any circumstances, peace between the two countries could have been maintained may be doubted. In looking upon all kings as their enemies, the French Republicans challenged monarchical Europe. But to attempt to put down the Revolution by force of arms, was from the beginning a hopeless undertaking, and carried with it its own inevitable defeat. As was justly said, it was with an armed doctrine that the allied Powers went to war, and could armed doctrines be put down by armies, led by sovereigns who were seeking their own aggrandisement, as had been done at the expense of Poland, and, though the intention was not avowed, might be done at the expense of France?

The French Jacobins, even while committing such frightful atrocities, had sympathisers and agents nearly everywhere. This was

the case even in England. It was especially the case in Ireland. The volunteers, organised to defend that country from invasion when it was virtually left defenceless in the middle of the last century, and subsequently, under not dissimilar circumstances, during the American war, were used even by patriotic men to extort the commercial and even political independence of their island. In the crisis of the war with the colonies, and with the impending intervention of France and Spain, Ireland, as was said, demanded freedom of trade with arms in her hand. The demand became irresistible; and an important and alluring lesson was given, which was not destined to remain undeveloped.

A Catholic Association had been formed about the time of George III's accession. It was only by degrees that the Association took up the questions of complete emancipation, and Parliamentary Reform. There were then three parties in Ireland: the Established Church, or ascendancy party, who had all the public patronage: the Protestant dissenters, or Non-conformists, of whom the large majority were Presbyterians: and the Catholics, who, owing to the penal laws, had little hold on the land as proprietors. Very soon after the French Revolution began, under the influence of its democratic spirit, the Catholic Association boldly raised its head. Its leaders, by inviting Edmund Burke's son, Richard, to be their agent and adviser, took what was regarded as a most judicious step. It was very well known that his illustrious father, while strongly opposed to the French Revolutionary ideas, was in favor of the emancipation of his Roman Catholic countrymen.

It is not difficult to understand that the French

Revolution, notwithstanding the crimes with which it became associated, had a powerful influence both on the Irish Catholics and the Protestant dissenters. The moderation, and what may be called the Conservatism, of Richard Burke under his father's teaching and influence, therefore, soon became obnoxious to those who looked forward to the establishment of an Irish Republic under French protection. Though at first avowedly constitutional, this gradually became the object of the first Society of United Irishmen founded in Belfast. It was followed by a similar Association, founded in Dublin under the encouragement of Wolfe Tone. At the beginning of his memoirs, Tone candidly confesses: "My object was to secure the independence of my country under any form of government. In this I was led by a hatred of England, so deeply rooted in my nature that it was rather an instinct than a principle." In another passage of his memoirs, writing from what he had himself observed in 1791-92, Tone says: "The Dissenters of the North, and more especially in the town of Belfast, are from the genius of their religion, and from the superior diffusion of political information among them, enlightened Republicans. They have ever been foremost in the pursuit of Parliamentary Reform, and I have already mentioned the early wisdom and virtue of the town of Belfast, in proposing the emancipation of the Catholics as far back as the year 1783."*

Between the Presbyterians, and other Protestants then spoken of as dissenters, and their descendants a century afterwards, there could scarcely be a greater

*The *Autobiography of Theobald Wolfe Tone*. Volume 1. Page 55 and page 47.

contrast. They may now be considered nearly all Unionists, devoted to the British connection, and to everything with which Wolfe Tone would have wished them not to sympathise. I have heard some people of considerable eminence regret this great change, and characterise it as political retrogression instead of political progress. But that is a matter of opinion, on which all readers will form their own conclusions.

The members of the Society of United Irishmen became more and more Republican and in favour of French intervention. Wolfe Tone succeeded Richard Burke as the agent, or adviser, of the Catholic Committee, and, it may be said, of the United Irishmen. He acted after his kind. The constitutional mask was soon thrown off, and even the Northern Whig Club, at first quite loyal, and moderately Liberal, found itself, after the resignation of many members who deprecated its recent course, very much like the Society of United Irishmen.

What was the result? In the North of Ireland even the Protestants became divided into two sections, bitterly opposed to each other.

The Catholic forty shilling freeholders had been granted the franchise in 1793. This was supposed to be only a step towards general Catholic emancipation. Soon afterwards the Duke of Portland, Lord Fitzwilliam, Earl Spencer, William Windham, and other Whigs,—old Whigs as they were called,—under Burke's encouragement joined the Ministry. Richard Burke was returned for Lord Fitzwilliam's pocket borough of Malton, in Yorkshire; and it was understood that he would go as Chief Secretary to Ireland, under Lord Fitzwilliam as the Lord-Lieutenant. But consumption had marked Richard Burke for its prey: and at a dinner given in anticipation of the appoint-

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ments, death, to all eyes but those of the happy father, was seen to be written on the young man's face. All the fond hopes of the father that, under his dearest friend, his son would take part in the emancipation of his Catholic countrymen, were buried in an early grave.

Lord Fitzwilliam went to Ireland as the Sovereign's Viceroy, only in a few weeks to be recalled. The hopes which the appointment had excited were painfully disappointed. A controversy afterwards arose, as to how far Lord Fitzwilliam was justified in encouraging the speedy removal of the Catholic disabilities. It was doubtless understood that there was to be some delay, that the business was not to be entered upon at once, or in the first year of Lord Fitzwilliam's Lord-Lieutenancy. As far as the Catholics were concerned, it was not intended, and could never have been intended, that matters should remain as they were. But the King, with his diligently inculcated scruples about his coronation oath, stood in the way, if apparently a little in the background. Lord Fitzwilliam himself acted somewhat precipitately by the dismissal of Beresford and others, a dismissal which alarmed Lord Downshire, and the representatives of the old ascendancy, who claimed as their right all the honours and emoluments of the State. On the circumstances of the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam it is not necessary to dwell. Its political effects, however, were most disastrous. They mark a turning point, and a retrogression, in Irish history.

The Orange Society was established primarily in opposition to the United Irishmen. Belfast may be said to be their home, the home which a short time before both Lord Charlemont, who had not made up

his mind in favour of Catholic Emancipation*—the logical and inevitable result of his politics—and Wolfe Tone, who sought by French arms to separate Ireland from Great Britain, professed even passionately to love.

United Irishmen who contemplated an appeal to arms before Lord Fitzwilliam's recall, only became more resolute in their object after that event. The Orangemen and their sympathisers, who were very numerous in the North of Ireland, were ready for resistance. The yeomanry, who were called out and prepared for action on the side of the Government, looked forward confidently to meeting all rebels who ventured to come openly into the field. Though the rebellion is always spoken of as that of '98, and had a centenary celebration in 1898, it may be said to have begun in 1797.

The hopes of a French invasion had a powerful effect on both the disaffected Catholics and Presbyterians. Ulster was in an extraordinary state, with which the Government seemed quite powerless to deal. The Ministers were groping their way in the dark. They were driven into severe and even oppressive measures, but when all that can be is said against them, they cannot be compared with the tyranny which had been, and still was being exercised in France, under a government professedly a republic based on the Rights of Man. Bonaparte's successful campaigns in Italy encouraged the Irish, who were looking forward to a French invasion. To enter on the details of the Irish Rebellion would here be supererogatory. It was gradually, and unmercifully, put down, though much cruelty was in-

*See *Charlemont Papers*. Part 2.

flicted on both sides. Lord Cornwallis, who had been appointed both Commander-in-Chief and Lord-Lieutenant, was a conscientious statesman, and, as he had shown during the war with the United States, a fair if not a brilliant soldier. Though some of his acts may not have appeared merciful, he made a stand in Kildare, and in other Irish counties, to save the innocent blood. The Quaker family at Ballitore—where there still existed the school of the Shackletons, at which Edmund Burke and his brother received their early education—had no sympathy with either lawless violence or arbitrary oppression. But they acknowledged that Lord Cornwallis was animated by humane motives, speaking of him as “the good Lord Cornwallis.”* They had excellent opportunities of observation, being not far from places where some of the most ruthless scenes were enacted.

It has been estimated that in the rebellion, of which it may be thought neither party had much reason to boast, a hundred and fifty thousand Irish and twenty thousand English were sacrificed. The French invasions, and attempted invasions, from which the rebellious Irish Protestants and Catholics hoped so much, were, it must be admitted, very poor affairs. They contributed greatly to keep the bad feeling on both sides alive, and to embitter it: but from either a military, or a patriotic point of view, their results were infinitesimal.

The effect, however, was to convince a large number of people that a union between Great Britain and Ireland had become a necessity. Very soon after the independence of the Irish Parliament had been conceded in 1782, under Lord Rockingham's

*See the *Leadbeater Papers*. Volume 1.

second administration, observers began to doubt whether the two representative bodies, one at Westminster and the other at Dublin, could harmoniously exist together. Burke, who may be considered the adviser of the concession, when Paymaster of the Forces of that Ministry, afterwards doubted whether the Government had not gone too far. Mr. Pitt's Lord-Lieutenant, the Duke of Rutland, not long after the Irish Parliament had begun to exercise its independent powers, expressed the opinion to his chief that a legislative union between the two islands afforded the only satisfactory solution of what had become a very difficult problem.* On the eve of the French Revolution the two legislatures differed on the question of the Regency, and, had the King's illness continued some years later, it might have produced serious consequences. These are simply statements of facts: readers may draw from them their own conclusions.

Another fact forces itself on the attention of those who look back to the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is that there could be no satisfactory parliamentary, or legislative union between the two islands so long as the large majority of the people of one of them laboured under either political or religious disabilities. The assertion, which has been sometimes made, even very recently, that the Government promoted the Irish rebellion with the object of carrying the Union as a recognised inevitability, is sufficiently refuted by the statement itself. The Duke of Portland, who was then Secretary of State for the Home Department,—which has had a great deal to do with Irish affairs—Mr. Pitt, the Prime

*See the *Letters of the Duke of Rutland*.

Minister, and the successive Lord-Lieutenants and Irish Chief Secretaries, whatever may have been their faults or errors, were among the most honourable of mankind. This even the most inveterate of their political enemies at that time would have admitted.

The Act of Union dates from the first year of the 19th century. It closes an old era both in British and Irish history, and marks the beginning of a new one. When it was being passed pledges were doubtless given by members of the Government that Catholic Emancipation should be an essential part of the Union, but comprised in a separate measure. Pitt, who had been some sixteen years Prime Minister, considered himself bound to carry out what he regarded as an honourable understanding. He learnt, however, that, though he had rendered George the Third such signal services, he could not overcome the King's stubborn prejudices, encouraged as they were by many who hoped to profit by this Royal obstinacy. Under such circumstances Pitt found his great position unbearable. The Act of Union dates from the 1st of January, 1801. The resignation of the great Minister almost immediately followed. The administration of the late Speaker, Henry Addington, began in the March of the same year, and, with some changes, continued until the May of 1804.

Notwithstanding the great naval victories of Nelson and his brother admirals, the century, from a political point of view, may be said to have begun disastrously for England. The clouds on the horizon were dark and lowering, and were to become darker and darker. George the Third, "farmer George," as he was called, may have had some of the virtues of the farmer; but even what may be considered his

virtues had the effect of the worst of crimes. "George, be King," was the advice given to him by the narrow German Princess, his mother, and by her friend Lord Bute, who had graduated in the school of her late husband, the Prince of Wales. By that school Lord Bolingbroke's writings had been regarded as oracles. Their object was to magnify the Royal Prerogative at the expense of those constitutional liberties, which were considered to have been established, by what was known as the glorious revolution of 1688-89.

George the Third and his advisers were responsible for two great evils; the American war, at the beginning of his reign, and, soon after its end, the agitation for the Repeal of the Union, which originated in the demand for Catholic Emancipation and became chronic. The United States separated from the Mother Country, to which the colonists had been accustomed to refer as their "home." They separated with bitter enmity in their hearts. Throughout the nineteenth century, till very recently, that enmity continued. The result was division, instead of unity, between the two great governments and people of the Anglo-Saxon race in the Old World and in the New. A similar result was produced in Ireland, and among the descendants of Irishmen in the two hemispheres, through statesmen and Parliaments submitting to the King's scruples about his coronation oath when the Act of Union was carried. Of George the Third as a sovereign, it may, indeed, be said, that the evil men do lives after them, the good is often interred with their bones.

CHAPTER II.

FIFTEEN YEARS OF WAR.

NAPOLÉON had been declared first Consul just before the eighteenth century ended. At the beginning of the nineteenth, a few months later, he defeated the Austrians at Marengo; and two years afterwards was made Consul for life. This was only a stepping stone to the Empire. The peace of 'Amiens, like the peace of Ryswick in the first year of the eighteenth century, was only regarded as a temporary truce. War broke out again, and burnt all the fiercer from the ashes under which it had been covered. The last ten years of the eighteenth century were nearly all years of war. The first fifteen years of the nineteenth, also, were nearly all occupied by war in Europe. Napoleon's ambition was boundless: it grew by what it fed on. The century thus opened most inauspiciously for anything worthy of being called political progress. Soon after having been proclaimed Emperor, the Corsican Adventurer, as he continued to be called in England, was crowned by the Pope, and a few months later crowned King of Italy. The attempted invasion of England from Boulogne was a failure: but it was soon followed by the defeat of the Austrians and their allies at Austerlitz, of the Prussians at Jena, and of the Russians at Eylau. It was obvious that the great conqueror was aspiring to universal Empire.

While the continent seemed prostrate at Napoleon's feet, England continued to fight on. Powerful as he was by land, she continued to be as powerful by sea. Wherever a ship could float, British maritime ascendancy was felt and recognized. This was not disputed by the Emperor, who seemed to have all continental Europe at his feet. Even in continental Europe his power was challenged by England, who sought to free the Spanish peninsula from the French arms, and from the new monarchy under Joseph Bonaparte, the Emperor's not very brilliant brother. Wellington during three years continued steadily to advance, driving before him the best of Napoleon's Marshals, and in the October of 1813 marched into France, while the army of Napoleon had been obliged to retreat most disastrously from Russia, many thousands of the seasoned veterans, whom he had so often led to victory, lying buried in the Russian snows.

Europe, with the spectacle of such reverses, again sprang to its feet. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, seized the opportunity of a common deliverance, and advanced from the North, and Northwest on Paris, while Wellington advanced from Toulouse, notwithstanding an alleged temporary check, at that place, which induced the French afterwards to include Toulouse on the long roll of French victories somewhat vaingloriously inscribed on the Arc de Triomphe. The allies entered Paris, and Napoleon was allowed to go to Elba. A few months afterwards he escaped, from what might be regarded as a prison, landed at Cannes, and the campaign of a hundred days began, ending in what Lord Byron called the great King-making victory of Waterloo.

A great king-making victory it undoubtedly was.

"It was a victory for Prussia," said a French gentleman, indignantly, as he contemplated the monument to the Duke of Wellington in the Church near the field of Waterloo. I did not contradict him; but it was the British infantry that bore the burden and the heat of the day. They did more. They had at its beginning to go through the most trying of all ordeals, the desertion of their allies, the Belgians, and to close up the spaces in the ranks of the order of battle thus suddenly and unexpectedly made vacant.

From the point of view of political progress, this long struggle against Napoleon had important consequences in England. The British had continued the struggle, while so many monarchies had been laid prostrate at Napoleon's feet. From an early period in the war against revolutionary France, notwithstanding that millions of British gold had been thrown broadcast over Europe to induce those who were considered our allies to fight their own battles, Mr. Pitt and his colleagues found themselves deserted by the governments they had paid, and had to fight almost alone. The people of the United Kingdom thus became thoroughly self-reliant, and prepared to look almost the whole world in the face.

But during this long struggle there had been no extension of popular freedom. The parliamentary franchise was confined to a very limited class. A number of what were called rotten boroughs belonged to proprietors, many of them noblemen, who regarded these seats as their private property. "Have I not a right to do what I like with my own?" were words reported as used, even many years afterwards, by the Duke of Newcastle, who returned Mr. Gladstone for his pocket borough of Newark. During the long war the landlords had received high rents

in consequence of the high prices. Food had, of course, been dear. There had been a practical monopoly, and what was in effect a virtually prohibitive system. With the peace the ports became more or less open, and prices began to fall. To counteract this the Corn Laws were enacted. They were in the interests of the landlords, or, as was said, of the country gentlemen, but at the expense of the labouring multitudes of the large towns, which were gradually extending with the progress of the country. There was much discontent, resulting in popular demonstrations, one of which at Manchester, if rightly represented, was of an alarming character, and was harshly suppressed. Peterloo was quoted against Waterloo. For many years the Government of the United Kingdom was essentially Tory, of which the leading principles were to uphold the landed interest, to maintain the Catholic disabilities, and to oppose a reform of the House of Commons as a dangerous concession to democracy.

Over continental Europe, with its monarchies dependent on armies which were said to have vanquished Napoleon, there soon arose the dark shadow of the Holy Alliance. This was a compact agreed to in the September of 1815, by the Emperors of Russia and of Austria and the King of Prussia. Its ostensible object was to bind the three sovereigns to be governed by Christian principles in their political transactions, with a view of perpetuating the peace which had just been established. Apparently nothing could have been more innocent. But in politics, words are too often one thing and acts another.

The British Ministers would not commit themselves and the Prince Regent to this Holy Alliance, which became the reverse of Holy. From the very

first it was declared in England to be an alliance of arbitrary sovereigns to keep their subjects under a despotic yoke. Reactionary as may have been Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, Lord Eldon, the Chancellor, Lord Sidmouth, the Home Secretary, and, to a certain extent, Lord Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary, they could not but recognise that they were ministers of a constitutional state, controlled by a parliament which had come down through many centuries,—a parliament which, if then on a somewhat narrow basis, was not disposed to surrender its hereditary privileges as the Second and Third Estates of the Realm.

The British Government, through Lord Castlereagh as their representative, did, indeed, acquiesce in proceedings on the part of the military monarchies contrary to all popular ideas. Before the French sovereign had been re-established, and while the victorious armies were encamped round Paris, it is said that a project was put forward, in a more or less private manner, for partitioning France. This the Duke of Wellington is stated to have resisted. He was told that it was somewhat surprising that he should adopt such a tone as he had under him an army of only sixty thousand men. "I may have only sixty thousand men," he is reported as answering, "but they can go anywhere, and do anything." This was when he was at the head of the seasoned veterans, who had marched with him from Madrid to Paris. Not anticipating Napoleon's escape from Elba, the British Ministers, at the conclusion of peace in 1814, had sent numbers of our best troops to America, and Wellington had to enter on the new campaign against Napoleon with many inexperienced soldiers, large

numbers of them being militia who had never fired a shot in actual warfare.

In the course of the earlier war when Austria made peace with France, and Napoleon by the treaty of Campo Formio gave a large part of the territory of Venice to his defeated enemy, Edmund Burke, in one of his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," remarked on the unwise and dangerous designs Austria had long entertained respecting Italy. What Austria first gained she had afterwards to relinquish, but only in 1814 to add all Venice to her Empire. No pretence was made of consulting the Venetians, or the other people, whose territories were taken away from their hereditary possessors and given to those who might with some reason be regarded as their hereditary enemies. Lord Castlereagh, when challenged on this subject in the House of Commons, thought it sufficient to reply that the object was to give to one of these Powers more force, and increase of population was that force. But the increase of an empire by annexing to it an unwilling, and even a hostile population, seldom adds to the strength of a state. This assuredly Austria herself has found in the long course of the present century. Morality cannot always be disassociated from politics with impunity. Burke in the earlier part of his political career justly said that politics were only the common principles of morality enlarged, and that he did not then, and never would, admit of any other view.* Fox thus derived from his old friend the aphorism often quoted, that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. Napoleon in his continual wars

* Letter to Dr. Markham, Bishop of Chester. *Works and Correspondence*. Vol. 1, 1772.

had no idea of extending the principles of human freedom. He would have laughed to scorn the Rights of Man, on which, though called the child of the Revolution, he remorselessly set his foot. The victorious allies, as they considered themselves by the arbitrary arrangements at the Congress of Vienna, and by the establishment of the Holy Alliance, acted in the same despotic spirit as the great conqueror, to whom they had in former years to make the most humiliating submissions.

The first thirty years of the nineteenth century can scarcely be said to represent political progress at all. The world appeared to be going backward instead of forward. Lord Byron, whose sympathies were Liberal, prophesied that "This will not endure, nor be endured." He was right: but it continued far into the century. Power contended against the will of the people: might against right. Carlyle has thought fit to state that the Rights of Man will ultimately be found the Rights of Man. This may very much depend on the interpretation given to the somewhat dogmatic words. Those who have the power can give to the words their own practical application, and this will generally be found in accordance with their own interests, or at least their presumed interests, of which they may be the irresponsible judges.

No sovereign had a more difficult task than Louis the Eighteenth, who was restored to the throne of his ancestors by the armies of Russia, Germany, and England. Paris was regarded as held by their swords, as, indeed, was all France. It has been said that the Bourbons, after the restoration of the Monarchy, had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. This phrase, so often quoted, is true when applied to them generally, and to their most violent adherents not

only in France, but in those reactionary days in Spain and Italy. It is scarcely, however, true of Louis the Eighteenth, who showed that he had learnt something, and had some regard for constitutional principles. He was surrounded by men who would keep no terms with public freedom, by whom, indeed, all freedom was looked upon as treason to the restored monarchy. Louis the Eighteenth was not allowed fair play by his brother, the Count of Artois, to whose breeches, in the early time of the Revolution, it has pleased Mr. Carlyle to give such great prominence. The Spanish revolution was put down by a French army, commanded by the Count's eldest son, in the spring of 1823, and Ferdinand the Seventh, under such auspices, returned to Madrid, and ruled in the most absolute fashion.

Where then was political progress? In the following year Louis the Eighteenth died, and the Count of Artois, under the title of Charles the Tenth, became the despotic sovereign of France. But French journalism, in its modern sense, had risen with the Doctrinaires. At its head at first were Guizot, Villemain and others, and a few years later Thiers, who became the editor of the *National*. In these men, who were still young, were concentrated the best hopes of France. It was a struggle between them and the government of Charles the Tenth, which, under the Prince de Polignac, became more reactionary than ever.

To these eminent journalists, full of youth and hope, France owed much even in the reactionary time. Charles the Tenth and Prince de Polignac were blind to their actual situation. This was a strange contrast to the early days of the French Revolution. Between 1789 and 1829 there was, it might

be said, nothing in common; but extremes naturally, and almost inevitably, produce extremes. The Chambers opposed the King and his Ministers. They were dissolved. The electors gave a new Chamber of Deputies. The five ordinances were published from St. Cloud, suspending the liberty of the Press, dissolving the new Chamber, altering the system of election so that absolute power might be secured, convoking another Chamber, and making ultra-Royalist appointments to the Council of State. Still the young journalists, under great difficulties, struggled on as best they could. Mr. Disraeli, at a later time, thought fit to express the opinion that an enlightened despotism and a free Press might together form the beau ideal of government. But they represent opposite and contradictory principles, and never can permanently exist together. It would be just as unreasonable to expect that the wolf and the lamb could harmoniously co-operate.

During these sad, long years, from the fall of the Napoleonic Empire and the Congress of Vienna, it was not, however, all absolute darkness. In the later time some political progress might be dimly discerned, where it was, perhaps, the least expected.

A movement for the independence of Greece had begun, and continued for several years. It was hoped by patriots, in many lands, that the modern Greeks might show some of the spirit of those who were called their fathers. Marathon and Missolonghi were coupled together. For the independence of Greece, Lord Byron may be represented as having sacrificed his life. The Porte at that time was thought to have no friends. Russia was believed to be watching for what Peter the Great had pointed out to be her destined prey. But the Duke of Wel-

lington was sent to St. Petersburg to endeavour to come to some understanding about a mediation by England in the differences between the Turks and the Greeks. At last, however, France, Russia, and England, agreed to combine in their maritime operations against the Porte. The result was that the Turkish fleet, though strengthened by Mehemet Ali's from Egypt, was destroyed. This was going further than the British Ministers had intended; and the naval battle of Navarino was officially declared to be "an untoward event." Untoward in effects it was: and this the friends of Turkey continued long afterwards to acknowledge and deplore. Greece to a limited extent acquired more or less of an independence; but it was an independence which was jealously watched by more than one great Power, and was not allowed to develop.

There was still another gleam of light. Despotism had been restored in Spain by a French army of a hundred thousand men,—one far larger than Wellington had employed in vindicating against Napoleon and his Marshals the independence of that peninsula. The Spanish colonies in South America had taken the opportunity of asserting their independence. Canning seized the retaliatory opportunity of acknowledging that independence, while the French Army was in Spain. He thought that he had performed a great political masterpiece. He said: "I called a New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old." Honourable members who heard this announcement stared at one another. One of them has recorded that on hearing those words he was astonished and knew not what to think. Canning's boast was a somewhat vainglorious one. The New World, in a political sense, had been called into

existence by the war with the British colonies, ending in the establishment of the United States of North America. The South American States, which Canning asserted that he had called into being to redress the balance of the Old World, have had no such effect. They can scarcely be said to have been political successes at all. Spain left them an evil legacy, from which none of them can be considered to have fully emancipated itself. For many years there was a continuance of misgovernment in some of them: there has been no steady improvement: scarcely any healthy political development. It is in North America, not in the South, and in the British colonies, that we must look for healthy political progress.

In France, too, there was suddenly a great change. Charles the Tenth had depended on the army to put down any disturbances in Paris. But Marshal Marmont, who commanded the troops, disapproved of the five ordinances, and was reluctant to employ force against the insurgents. The Revolution of the three days of July began on the 27th. The barricades were erected. On the 29th two regiments fraternized with the people, and there were indications that others would follow the example. The people became masters of the Louvre and the Tuileries. Charles the Tenth offered from St. Cloud to make concessions which the day before he had refused. But the fatal words, "Too late," so often heard in similar circumstances, were pronounced. Paris had the most pacific of its revolutions up to that time, and the former idol, Lafayette, now an old man, was placed at the head of the National Guard. Thiers and Mignet, the young journalists, called on the people to make the Duke of Orleans, the son of Philippe Egalité, King, and he declared his acceptance of the Lieutenant-Generalship

of France, from which there was but a step to placing upon his head the crown of a constitutional monarchy.

This was hailed as political progress indeed. So it was. It came from where it was least expected, and from where there had been already great and even terrible revolutions. It was hailed in England especially with enthusiasm. The question was nearly everywhere asked: "Was France to lead the way in steady and beneficent political progress, and England, the recognized home of constitutional government, to be content to stand still?"

CHAPTER III.

A SUDDEN CHANGE.

GEORGE THE FOURTH died in the June of 1830. This was little more than a month before Louis Philippe became King of France, or, as may be more correctly said, King of the French. Of George the Fourth's character it is not necessary to say much, or indeed anything. In his younger days, as Prince of Wales, he had been the friend of Sheridan, Fox, and the Whigs, though scarcely of Burke, who was seldom seen at Carlton House. He was not supposed to have the scruples of his father with respect to the Coronation oath, or, indeed, to have any religious scruples at all. As King, however, he raised the same objections to Roman Catholic Emancipation; or, as it used to be said, to a "Catholic Prime Minister." Ministers favourable to the removal of the Catholic disabilities were called Catholics, a distinction being drawn between them and their Anti-Romanist colleagues.

On the death of Lord Liverpool, in the April of 1827, Canning claimed the premiership as his by inheritance. George the Fourth reluctantly submitted to this claim. The Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel retired from the Administration rather than serve under a Prime Minister favourable to the removal of the religious disabilities. The Duke, in fact, wanted to be Prime Minister himself, though the pretension was never openly avowed.

In communicating his positive refusal to serve under Canning as Prime Minister, Peel wrote: "For the period of eleven years I have been connected with the administration over which Lord Liverpool presided. Six of those years I was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and for the remaining five, Secretary of State for the Home Department. In each office I was in immediate contact with Irish affairs, and deeply responsible for their administration. During the whole of that period—indeed during the whole of my public career—I have taken a very active and prominent part in opposition to the Catholic claims, and, acting in unison with the head of the government of which I was a member, can I see the whole influence and authority of Prime Minister transferred from Lord Liverpool to you, without a conviction that the sanguine hopes of the Catholics will be excited, and that the Catholic question will be materially affected by the change?"*

This is a remarkable letter. It cannot be too attentively considered, both from what preceded and what followed. Just two years after it was written, Peel himself proposed, and carried, the Catholic Emancipation Bill through the House of Commons; and the Prime Minister, his colleague the Duke of Wellington, secured the passing of the measure by the House of Lords. It was the beginning on the part of Peel, and of those who were afterwards as his followers called the Peelites, of many inconsistencies; not, indeed, always so sudden and so startling, but quite as contradictory of their former professions and principles.

*Stapleton's *George Canning and his Times*. 1827. Page 592.

In advocating the Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Commons, Peel pointed out that for years, and notably in 1826, some of the largest county and other constituencies, had been on the side of the removal of the disabilities. The same evidence, however, was before him when he wrote his letter to Canning, who, when he accepted office as Prime Minister, was a dying man. He only survived Lord Liverpool two months, having at the funeral of the latter contracted a cold from which he never recovered. Peel did not show Canning much consideration or forbearance during the two months of his premiership. Some seventeen years later, when Peel made his great change from Protection to Free Trade, Lord George Bentinck, Canning's relative, accused him of having hounded his noble kinsman to death. In this language there was doubtless considerable exaggeration, as there was at that time in Mr. Disraeli's attacks on Peel. But it may be thought that these sudden changes by statesmen from one set of principles to another, have not generally an elevating effect on the public mind. To persist in hopeless error may be inexcusable. But in the teachers of mankind, the leaders of public opinion, some earnest and definite convictions may be thought desirable, as conducive to political morality, and therefore to political progress. As has been stated, men of great eminence ought to know before they undertake to teach. To teach is to lead, and not to follow.

The Roman Catholic Association on an extended scale, embracing the whole Irish Catholic people and their clergy, had been organized six years before under O'Connell. It was, however, almost as formidable when Peel refused to take office under Canning, as it was in the August of 1829. In the preceding year,

indeed, O'Connell had been elected for the County of Clare in defiance of the law. In one sense his return might be regarded as idle bravado: but it produced a considerable effect on public opinion. There were whispers that the Roman Catholic soldiers, of whom there were a considerable body in the army, could not be trusted. Not for the first time in Ireland nor for the last time, there seemed to many political observers the portents of civil war. Some words used by the Duke of Wellington have often been quoted: "My Lords, most of my life has been spent in fields of war, and of civil war, too: but to save my country from a few hours of civil war I would gladly lay my life down." It may be retorted that statesmen in high position, that great warriors and conquerors, ought to recognize the bent of public opinion and the inevitable tendency of political progress, before making their choice between civil war, or granting great and desirable reforms.

Lord John Russell, who was rising to eminence as a political leader, had succeeded in repealing the Test and Corporation Acts the previous year, notwithstanding the opposition of Peel and Wellington at the head of the Government. This showed that public opinion on certain questions was steadily advancing. But so long as the Catholic disabilities were retained, a large amount of Protestant opinion and prejudice would naturally be in favour of a Tory, and what might be regarded as a No-Popery Administration. When, however, Peel and Wellington gave way on what many people in Great Britain regarded as a vital question, they alienated many of their followers. Not long afterwards, young William Ewart Gladstone, in the Oxford Union, proposed and carried a vote of censure on his future friend, Sir Robert Peel, for

having removed the Catholic disabilities. Gladstone did not foresee that later he would himself follow his leader in a sudden change of opinion while in office, and afterwards by another great change alter in no small degree the relations of parties and of public men to one another.

But the great question of Reform, after the repeal of the Catholic disabilities, did not at first make much apparent advance. It was maturing by degrees, but not at first with much open manifestation. We find, for instance, Macaulay, in his *Essay on Hallam's Constitutional History of England*, published in the September of 1828, stating that it was only at intervals the demand for Parliamentary Reform became loud and vehement. "But," he added, "it seems to us that during the remissions, the feeling gathers strength, and that every successive burst is more violent than that which preceded it. The public attention may for a time be diverted to the Catholic claims, or the Mercantile code: but it is probable that at no very distant time, perhaps in the lifetime of the present generation, all other questions will merge in that which, in a certain degree, is connected with them all."

It is obvious that when the brilliant historian and essayist spoke of such a crisis on the Reform question being likely to occur during his generation, he did not imagine that the storm would burst in about two years. When he ventured to anticipate that his generation might have to act and suffer in it, he did not foresee that the time for acting and suffering in it was close at hand. He did not foresee that before three years had gone, he would himself be a Liberal member of Parliament, speaking with great rhetorical ability in favour of the first Reform Bill of Lord Grey's Administra-

tion. A constitutional monarchy had been set up in France, and the people of the British Isles suddenly awoke to the immediate importance and necessity of Parliamentary Reform, which included so many other things. This was, indeed, political progress. A new Parliament met in the October of 1830. In that Parliament were the Irish Catholic members, under O'Connell. This was in itself the beginning of a great change. There were now a new Sovereign, a new House of Commons, a new set of members, professing more or less to sympathise with the Whigs, or, as they began to be called, the Liberals. King William the Fourth was thought to be a much more constitutional sovereign than his brother, or father, had been. But even then the Ministers, with the Duke of Wellington and Peel at their head, were dead to the signs of the times. In answer to Lord Grey's complaint that no mention of Reform was made in the Royal Speech, the Duke of Wellington declared himself against all schemes of Parliamentary Reform. He would have nothing to do with any of them: the constitution was perfect: so far as he and his colleagues were concerned, the sacred Ark should remain untouched.

It has been said that Peel, in private, disapproved of the Prime Minister's speech. We have, however, principally to do with the public acts of leading ministers and statesmen, and not with their alleged private thoughts. In the House of Commons Peel was, and continued to be, the leader of a government opposed to all Parliamentary Reform, till the country, by this resistance, was suddenly driven to the verge of revolution. He was the leader of the House of Commons, when, in the preceding session, he opposed Lord John Russell's moderate proposal that certain seats which

had become vacant, should be given to the large and populous towns of Liverpool, Birmingham, and Manchester, and not to places which had only a nominal population. Nothing can be said in excuse for such fatuous short-sightedness. Even the reluctant concession of Catholic Emancipation, instead of encouraging Wellington and Peel to advance on the path of Parliamentary Reform, appeared only to have made them do what they could to bar the way, and become more stubborn and reactionary.

Lord Chatham had been in favour of increasing the independent county representation at the expense of the rotten boroughs. His son, in his earlier political days, had also been a Reformer: but allowed his zeal in the cause gradually to decline, as his Ministry became more or less Tory, especially during the French Revolution. Fox and his immediate followers continued professed Reformers. Burke, indeed, who had never forgotten the Gordon riots, had stood aloof from the cause, while to the last an ardent friend of Catholic Emancipation. But some thirty-four years had gone by since his death, and the French Revolution had passed away like a dream.

Under the new government, Lord John Russell, in the comparatively subordinate position of Paymaster of the Forces, brought in the first Reform Bill of Lord Grey's Cabinet, of which he was not at that time a member. That Bill is now regarded as having been a moderate measure. It proposed to confer the franchise on the ten pound householders in the boroughs, and on the leaseholders and free-holders in the counties. The Earl of Durham, Lord Grey's son-in-law, had previously sought to go much further, even to the length of giving that household suffrage, which,

almost a generation afterwards was granted by Mr. Disraeli, for the purpose of "dishing the Whigs."

Lord John Russell, in introducing the Reform Bill of the Ministry, was almost appalled by the proposals which were practically his own. He explained, almost with bated breath, that the effect of the Bill would be to introduce half a million of electors into the constituencies. Half a million of electors! "This is not Reform: this is Revolution," exclaimed members of the opposition. Their newspapers, of course, echoed this cry. Mr. John Wilson Croker, who had been known as the Conservative Secretary of the Admiralty, but who now under Lord Downshire's patronage represented the Ulster borough of Downpatrick, began in the "Quarterly Review" a series of articles against Reform, against it may be said all political progress. Those articles now form a curious study. Mr. Croker was afterwards somewhat unmercifully sketched in "Coningsby," as the Right Hon. Nicholas Rigby, Rigby being one of the Duke of Bedford's very unscrupulous adherents in the early part of George the Third's reign. It is quite true that Mr. Croker, like Mr. Disraeli's Rigby, did not care even to sit in the Reformed House of Commons. The small borough of Downpatrick was preserved, and with the landlord influence strong in Ireland, Croker might, had he pleased, still have continued to sit in the House of Commons. He had been, and was still regarded as the agent of the Marquis of Hertford. But he and those who shared his views were no believers in anything which could be called political progress.

It is no part of the object of this volume to look at the various political questions associated with political progress from a party point of view. But no person,

whatever may be his or her political opinions, would now think of denying that the reform of the representation as carried by Lord Grey's Government had a Conservative effect. It attached at least the middle classes to the State, and laid the foundation of a still broader franchise, which was slowly allowed to mature.

Many years afterwards, Mr. Gladstone was taunted by his rival with having been at this time, in the Oxford Union, one of the most earnest champions of the rotten boroughs. As has already been said, he had been, in the same arena, the opponent of Catholic Emancipation. The fact was not denied. In the course of the debates on the Reform measures, it was often stated that after they were carried the House of Commons would no longer be a place for gentlemen. When this and other statements of a similar character were made, and protested against in a somewhat indignant manner by the supporters of the Bills, those who uttered the criticisms took care to refer to the interruptions as even by anticipation justifying their truth. Coming events were represented to be casting their shadows before. Many very able young men had owed their introduction to parliamentary life through what might be called the back-door of the Constitution. That entrance was about to be closed, not always, perhaps, with advantage. But some of the large constituencies have shown as much discrimination as many of the noble patrons of the old pocket boroughs, in the candidates returned.

In the manner in which the English Reform Bill, which virtually included its sisters, was carried, there was something not very constitutional in character. The defeat of the great Coalition Ministry of Fox and

North was brought about by the interference of George the Third; who wrote a letter, which was to be shown by Lord Temple to wavering Peers, stating that His Majesty would regard as his personal enemies those who supported what was called Fox's India Bill, which was really drafted from Burke's notes.* This proceeding, to which Pitt owed his first and long Premiership, had always been condemned by the Whigs as most unconstitutional. Now, when for the first time for forty-eight years after that act on the part of the sovereign they had a large majority supporting the Reform Bill in the House of Commons, against the majority of the House of Lords, they permitted the King to appeal to many of the Conservative Peers to absent themselves from the House of Lords, and thus allow the measure to become law. This was the alternative adopted to avoid the creation of a number of new Peers: but many people may still think that of the two proposed expedients, the worse was acted upon by William the Fourth, with at least the acquiescence of a great reforming Whig Administration. Lord John Russell had misgivings with respect to the manner in which the measure was carried. There was, as he has left on record, nothing very dignified in a majority "afraid to appear, and skulking in clubs and country houses in the face of a measure, which had attracted the ardent sympathy of public opinion."

The step was excused on account of the intention. It enabled the great Reform Bill to pass, and it did pass. "Gratitude to Earl Grey," was the cry of the Liberals at the general election; and it was almost too

*See *Works and Correspondence*. Volume 2.

fully answered. The new Reformed Parliament, in which the popular voice received full expression, met on January the 29th, 1833. The Liberal leader, Lord Althorp, found himself supported by four hundred and eighty-five members. The great Tory Party, which had been more or less dominant for half a century, and, during the first twenty-nine years of the present century had appeared more opposed to progress than it had been since it was led by Harley and Bolingbroke under the influence of the country gentlemen, and the October Club, was only represented on the Opposition benches by a hundred and seventy members. This was a change, indeed. It exceeded all anticipations. It alarmed some of those who were most anxious to use it to further the cause of political progress. They said to one another, "We are too strong." A new era had begun. Would the old institutions of the country stand the storm which appeared to be gathering round them? This was a question to be determined, with some others of great, if not equal, importance.

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESSIVE MEASURES.

"GRATITUDE to Earl Grey" might return a majority to support a government, but it could not long be the motive force for carrying on the government. The cry of "measures and not men" had been always popular with the Root and Branch politicians of an earlier time. The name had now been changed for that of Radical, which Mr. Bright, even while representing Radical Birmingham, declared that he never liked.

Charles, Earl Grey, who had been so often characterised and toasted as the friend of Charles Fox, was almost the antithesis of a Radical. In his manners he was essentially aristocratic, cold, reserved, and when opposed, somewhat haughty. When the House of Lords was threatened by some of his own professed supporters, he declared that he would stand by his Order. He had his Order, and of it he was proud. He was in no respect a leveller. He had shown much ability when the majority was against him in the great aristocratic assembly. Liberals like Macaulay, who had been returned for Leeds in the new parliament, listened to him with pride until the morning sun streamed through the windows of the House of Lords, and gave their tribute to the great orator and statesman, though he was not the foremost in the last generation. But with the carrying of the

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Reform measures his work appeared to be done, his occupation to be gone.* The new generation desired political progress that was not merely of a party character. Social questions demanded recognition. One of these of the greatest importance was dealt with during the first session of the Reformed Parliament. This was the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies, the promotion of industry among the freed slaves, and the payment as compensation to their former owners of twenty millions sterling. If ever there was a measure which marked an era in political progress this was surely one. Burke, Fox, Pitt, Sheridan, and Wilberforce, had been earnest advocates for the removal of this blot on the constitutional freedom of the growing British Empire. To the assertion that slaves were happy, Burke had indignantly replied: "There can never be a happy slave except in a degraded man." Earl Grey himself, as Lord Howick, after succeeding Fox as Foreign Secretary, carried through Parliament, in association with Wilberforce, the Act abolishing the slave trade. The Norman vassals, or villeins, were regarded as chattels. By that marvellous ruler, Alfred the Great, laws respecting the sale of slaves had been made in Saxon times. Queen Elizabeth sought to make her bondsmen free in the western counties. But from the time serfdom was extinguished in 1660, notwithstanding the teachings of Christianity, slow progress was made on the question of slavery even in England, until the memorable judgment of Lord Mansfield, in the Court of Queen's Bench, in the Somerset case, declaring that slavery could not exist in Great Britain.

*See Macaulay's *Essay on Warren Hastings*.

An Act passed during the first session of the Reformed Parliament worthily extended this great constitutional principle to the British colonies, and it was afterwards, though somewhat tardily, followed by the abolition of slavery in the East Indies. Some years later the flight of a slave named Anderson, from the United States to Canada, and a demand for his surrender, raised an important issue. He had killed a planter. The Canadian judges declared that by law Anderson should be given up: but a writ of Habeas Corpus was obtained for his appearance in the Court of Queen's Bench. The release was granted on technical grounds.

Thus the Reform Era was happily inaugurated by the complete abolition of slavery. Enormous sums of money, which, however, have never been regretted, have been expended to put down what may be regarded as slavery upon the seas. Only very recently, in the newly acquired island of Zanzibar, given up by Germany in return for the cession of Heligoland, an objection was made that the British officials had recognized the slave trade: but in this charge there does not appear to have been anything serious. On the question of slavery great progress was made in the first half of the century. The British flag in the United Kingdom, and throughout the wide dominions of the British Empire, represents a Power hostile to the existence of slavery in every form. In this respect political progress has been a great fact.

The education of the people also began to be recognised as a duty of the Government. The Irish National School system, when first instituted by the then Mr. Stanley, as Irish Chief Secretary, with the co-operation of the Protestant Archbishop Whately and

the Roman Catholic Archbishop Murray, was professedly non-sectarian. The object was to unite Protestant and Catholic children on the same benches, and by teaching them together make them understand one another better. But the principle can scarcely be said to have been carried out according to the intentions of its author. The Irish National Schools, under a large number of clerical managers, have always been more or less denominational.

In England, Sunday Schools, and a Sunday School Union, had been formed some twenty years before the close of the eighteenth century. Many denominational schools in connection with the various churches had been established. Joseph Lancaster, a young Quaker, had set about instructing the poor,—a duty which bishops and statesmen could scarcely be said as yet to have recognised. By the appointment of the Charity Commission Lord Brougham may claim to have had much to do with the beginning of popular education. His well-known words: “The school-master is abroad” became a great fact. Later, Mr. John Arthur Roebuck might claim a similar honour, though with respect to the question he did not show a steady consistency. Mechanics’ Institutes were being gradually set up in all the more important towns, and began to do a great work. Though popular education by the State had indeed been recognised in Ireland, in England State education was still at a somewhat remote distance. Numbers of people maintained that to educate the poor, was not to improve them, but to make them dissatisfied with their lot in life. It was unpleasant to these shortsighted people to hear the word education applied to

those who had not means from their families, or from other private sources, to educate themselves.

Lord Althorp's Poor Law Amendment Act, which was passed in the session of 1834, was also an important step both in political progress and social reform. It recognized a serious economic grievance in a great and progressive country, where one person in every seven was a pauper. A great deal more was yet to be done. But there was soon a great reduction in the Poor Rate, and by the change in what was called the Law of Settlement of the poor, the workmen, to adopt their own language, were afterwards to follow their work.

Ireland, however, was already beginning to be acknowledged as the great difficulty of a Reforming Administration. On the formation of Lord Grey's Ministry, after the general election following on the passing of the Reform Act, the King in a speech from the Throne expressed the hope that the Houses would co-operate with his Government in preserving and maintaining order in Ireland, and in strengthening the Union between the two countries. The words in which this intimation was announced were significant. The Act of Union had been carried by Pitt and the Tory party. If Burke had lived it is almost certain that he would have opposed the measure, unless accompanied by Catholic Emancipation, without which, as he wrote to an Irish correspondent, Union was impossible. His friend French Lawrence, and many of Fox's party, including Sheridan, had opposed the Bill. It could scarcely have been accepted by the Whigs until the words were formally put by them into the King's speech. Canning, who, of course, supported the Act of Union, when it

was first recommended to Repeal it, exclaimed: "Repeal the Union! Restore the Heptarchy!" When O'Connell found himself at the head of his Catholic followers, his attitude to the Whig Ministers was the reverse of friendly. In the debate on the address in answer to the King's message, he attacked the Government with great vehemence. Macaulay replied to his speech with much spirit, and brought forward strong arguments in support of the Act of Union, which O'Connell had not especially mentioned. In the course of the four nights' debate it was fully understood that all the Ministers accepted the Union, which had now become the recognised policy of the Reform Cabinet. O'Connell moved an amendment to the Address: but it was defeated by four hundred and twenty-eight votes to forty.

The Irish question now assumed the great prominence which it was destined so long to maintain. A Coercion Bill was introduced, and carried. An Irish Tithes Bill, not exactly on the same lines as the English Act, was carried through the House of Commons, but was thrown out by the Lords. The Ministers at last declared their intention of dealing with what were called the surplus revenues of the Irish Church Establishment, in which it was said there were eight millions of money for a Protestant Episcopal population of only eight hundred thousand. Nothing, however, was yet positively heard of Irish Disestablishment. It will be seen, indeed, when this question did become pressing some thirty-four years afterwards, that Lord John Russell declined to deal with it, on account of the "heartburnings" he thought it would cause. When I had a conversation with him still later, in Belfast, he was anxious to act on a policy of concurrent endowment, or what was called

levelling up, instead of levelling down, in order, as he thought, to save the doomed Irish Church Establishment. Where political progress has been, and is, on this Irish question, all readers will determine according to their own ideas. It is remarkable that when O'Connell moved his amendment to the Address in reply to the King's Message, though evidently in favour of two separate legislatures, he was not opposed to having only one government for the two islands.

The position of Lord Grey's Cabinet in having, almost from the first, to become coercionists, was doubtless most unfortunate. Even the Irish Tithes Bill, and the Irish Municipal Bill, were not regarded as sufficient atonement by O'Connell. He spoke of the base, bloody, and brutal Whigs, with whom, however, when they went into Opposition to Sir Robert Peel's short administration, an alliance was arranged at a meeting, called the Lichfield House compact, which existed for seven years, until the fall of Lord Melbourne's Government.

Though this alliance was denounced, it is not easy to see how it could have been avoided. O'Connell, though he became the head of the Repeal movement, generally regarded himself as a Liberal. He had undoubtedly Liberal sympathies. The Irish Tithes Bill, the Irish Municipal Bill, and the Irish Poor Law Bill, could scarcely be considered revolutionary or confiscatory measures. They at least, whatever may be thought of the Repeal question, could not be represented as retrogressive, and not in the direction of political progress. They were demanded by the circumstances of the time. The famous Appropriation Clause, subsequently to Mr. Ward's earlier amendment, was associated with the

name of Lord John Russell, as leader of the Government in the House of Commons after Lord Grey's resignation, and Lord Althorp's elevation to the House of Peers on the death of his father, Lord Spencer. It roused strong Protestant opposition, especially among the supporters of the old ascendancy in Ireland, who were proud, and to a certain extent still are proud, of calling themselves, through some of their newspapers, a garrison.

To protest against the Appropriation Clause a great meeting under the presidentship of the Marquis of Downshire, was held at Hillsborough in the October of 1834. The Protestants of both the great Ulster denominations attended. The Rev. Dr. Cooke, the recognized Presbyterian leader, made common cause with the members of the Irish Establishment, and, in words which were long remembered and quoted, publicly proclaimed the bands of marriage between the two Churches.

Up to this time many of the Presbyterian clergy, and large numbers of the Presbyterian laity, had been Liberals. They had, indeed, gone further than ordinary Liberals, or Whigs, as the seventeenth century was closing. But there was now a perceptible change in their attitude. This was not unnatural considering the Repeal agitation under O'Connell, who had a simple way of accounting for this change. He could not make the Ulster Liberals, and especially the Presbyterians, his instruments. Many years afterwards he said: "*The Northern Whig* appears to me to be a fair specimen of the hypocrisy of political principles in Belfast. They invoke the name of Liberty, while they assail the ardent friend of freedom. They affect a generous sympathy with the oppressed, while they are as stout

and persevering calumniators as the best trained dealer in virulent falsehood to be found in the entire Orange gang.”* This is given as a specimen of the many similar denunciations, which characterized nearly the whole of O’Connell’s parliamentary career. His denunciations included all the Ulster Liberals whom *The Northern Whig* represented, and not merely the Presbyterians. The effort which was made at the Lichfield House meeting to come to terms with O’Connell, might have been successful much earlier had a more conciliatory attitude been adopted by Stanley, the first Irish Chief Secretary of the Reform Administration. It was said fools had prophesied there would be great difficulties in governing Ireland, and that the fools turned out to be right, and the wise men wrong. After such a great change from extreme Conservatism to what the Tories and their newspapers represented as Radicalism, and indeed Revolution, it was doubtless disappointing during these years to find so much disagreement between Lord Grey and some of his colleagues, and afterwards between his successor, Lord Melbourne, and his colleagues. It is no part of the design of this volume to enter into personal details. There were great confusion and dissension. But when all has been said, the impartial opinion will probably be, that Lord John Russell felt the responsibility of inheriting the traditions of a great historic party, which had long been on the side of constitutional progress, and that the efforts he made to give some conscientious consistency to his policy, deserve to be honourably remembered. It has been said that the Irish Catholics might have been conciliated had the first Reform Administration

* O’Connell’s *Speeches*. Vol. 2. Page 45.

shown more desire to recognise their claims to legal appointments, to the magistracy, and other offices, which they afterwards received as a matter of course. But it might be urged in reply that for such appointments most of them had to qualify themselves. Irish Catholics generally could scarcely be said to be fit for office, until they had acquired experience. O'Connell thought that he ought to have had the Attorney-Generalship. It was doubtless galling to aspiring men not to have their claims to offices acknowledged by deeds, while the possession of such offices was admitted to be their legal right.

The fair admission of Catholics to office cannot be said to have taken place while William the Fourth's brief reign was coming to a close. It was only by degrees, and in later and happier times, that Mr. Sheil, who himself became Master of the Mint, and died a British Consul in Italy, acknowledged that Catholic Emancipation was complete. This was at least an admission, from the brilliant Catholic rhetorician's point of view, that substantial political progress had been made.

It may be said there was now no longer stagnation. The British nation seemed to be stirring with new life, which also appeared to animate the French, who under a constitutional sovereign, as yet only possessed a very limited franchise. Eminent English Liberals who looked across the Channel at what was passing under the government of the Citizen King, Louis Philippe, thought the British Reform Administration and the French Government were going on parallel paths, and that so far as France was concerned the era of Revolutions was closed. "We have now, we think, the whole before us," was complacently said in 1835 by Macaulay, who assumed a lofty

superiority over Burke, because the great Irishman refused to admit that the goal of France was the constitutional monarchy, over which French and British Liberals had joined hands, in the first year of Louis Philippe's reign and the last of William the Fourth's.*

Men were turning their minds to social and economical problems, which for the most part, though not absolutely, had been neglected by Sir Robert Peel before he began to lead the Tory forlorn hope. Certain reforms in the criminal code, long recognised as desirable, were carried, as well as others which could not be said to be of a merely partisan character. War, as war, was condemned, not only as un-Christian, but also as involving reckless expenditure and an increase in the National debt, which amounted to more than eight hundred millions. The country was thought to be staggering under this burden. Joseph Hume, and other Radical members, did all they could to point out the extravagance which had added so much to the taxation. It was owing to Hume that the Liberals, in many constituencies, not only were pledged to Peace and Reform, but also to Retrenchment; or, as was then said, to Peace, Economy, and Reform.

These became popular watchwords. The army and navy were reduced out of all proportion to the demands which were soon to be made upon them by a steadily growing Empire. The expenditure on the army was brought down to some seven millions. It was said that, even with the great Duke of Wellington looking on, the nation was content to repose on the laurels it had won in the Peninsular War, and

*See Macaulay's *Essay on Sir James Mackintosh*.

on the great pitched field of Waterloo. In later years, when efforts were made to increase the army and navy, Joseph Hume, and other Radicals, habitually referred to the wisdom of the first Reform Administration in keeping down the public expenditure in what they represented as the two extravagantly spending departments of the state. They reproached Liberal Ministers with having abandoned the economy of their predecessors. It was thought that a large army, and a large navy, maintained by what Hume regarded as an enormous expenditure, could not represent political progress.

It is not necessary to enquire how far this popular assumption was correct. Time will tell its own story. Nor is it necessary to notice the Ministerial dissensions, the personal jealousies, and rivalries of this time. The King's pretensions to impose conditions on the policy of his Ministers, especially with respect to the Appropriation Clause of the Irish Tithes Bill, were a continuation of the objections raised by his brother, and father, under the terms of the Coronation Oath. But the King's objections were more or less overcome. There was no longer a large body of so called King's friends, depending on the favour of the sovereign, and acting as though the people, and Ministers who had an independent policy, were the King's enemies. The rotten boroughs, to a considerable extent the support of these sycophants of Royalty, had in a great measure disappeared, and were to be known no more. On both sides of the House of Commons a more earnest spirit was shown with respect to legislation than there had been before the extension of the franchise. The Tithe Commutation Act strengthened, and did not in any way weaken the Church of England. The Irish Poor

Law Bill was passed. But the Irish Municipal Bill, accepted by the House of Lords, was rejected by the Commons: and the Irish Tithes Bill, which had been introduced five times, had to be given up in consequence of the death of the King.

This event, which occurred on the 20th of June, 1837, came as a surprise to the nation, and even the Government. Of the character of William the Fourth it is not necessary to say anything in these pages. His reign marks the end of an old system of monarchy, which may be said to have been "made in Germany," and was inculcated on the youthful mind of George the Third by his mother, and her favorite adviser, Lord Bute. It was not, indeed, the old assertion of the Divine Right of Kings. To this the Hanoverian sovereigns could scarcely lay claim while a Pretender to the Crown in the direct line from James the Second was still in existence. But it was the assertion of the sovereign's personal supremacy in great matters of public policy. This Royal Supremacy had been asserted with modifications according to time and circumstances, from the day George the Third ascended the Throne, with the admonition of his mother, "George, be King," until the end of the first third of the nineteenth century. Then there was a change, a change which was instinctively felt by all classes. The people breathed more freely, and assurances were apparent that there would be nothing of a merely formal character in the political progress of the brighter days that were to come.

CHAPTER V.

BEGINNING OF THE QUEEN'S REIGN.

ON May the 19th, 1828, Sir Walter Scott records in his Diary that he dined by command with the Duchess of Kent. "I was," he writes, "very kindly recognised by Prince Leopold,—and presented to the little Princess Victoria. This little lady is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are heir of England.' I suspect if we could dissect the little heart we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter."* These lines read strangely seventy-two years after they were written, when the "little lady" has reigned sixty-two years, and is now a venerable octogenarian.† At the general election which ensued on the accession of the young Queen, Lord John Russell, then Secretary of the Home Department, on being again returned for Stroud made some memorable observations. "We have had," he said, "glorious female reigns. Those of Elizabeth and Anne led us to great victories. Let us now hope that we are going to have a female reign illustrious in its deeds of peace—an Elizabeth without her tyranny, an Anne without her weakness." Macaulay a few years afterwards said something to the same

*Lockhart's *Life of Scott*.

†A short time after these lines were written the venerable Queen died.—Eds.

effect, expressing the hope that Queen Victoria's reign would be regarded as that of a gentler Elizabeth.

During what may be termed the second part of Lord Melbourne's administration, the domestic policy pursued continued to be more or less progressive. But there was not much in it to excite popular enthusiasm. It is admitted, however, that the political education of the young and inexperienced Queen, was especially directed by her Prime Minister, and that the effect has been eminently beneficial during all the eventful years Her Majesty has occupied the throne. It would be difficult to overrate the great public service thus performed by one who was represented as scarcely a serious statesman, and as looking upon public life as a jest. This service was far beyond any measure of political progress: it was political progress in the highest and best sense of the word. Whatever may be regarded as Lord Melbourne's faults, shortcomings more or less of a personal character, most patriotic citizens of the United Kingdom and of the British Empire will feel that gratitude to this statesman's memory which it is well known the Queen herself has long entertained.

Lord Palmerston, of whom the youthful Mr. Disraeli writes to his sister as only one of a not very brilliant "lot," was the Foreign Minister, an office which, with some intervals, he long continued to fill. A new spirit, destined to develop, began to display itself in the Foreign Office. That spirit had an effect in many continental countries where efforts were being made to continue the Holy Alliance, in order to keep down what was regarded as revolutionary democracy, which for the most part was nothing more dangerous than a desire for constitutional freedom. In Spain there

was now a strong protest against absolutism. Ferdinand the Seventh's daughter was acknowledged as heir to the throne, with her mother Christina as Regent. She was supported against Don Carlos by Great Britain. A British fleet, operating on the Spanish coast, gave effective aid to what was professedly a constitutional government. This was a great change from what had been seen in the previous decade, when the despotism of Ferdinand the Seventh had been supported by a French army of a hundred thousand men. Charles the Tenth had died an exile in England; and the accession of Ferdinand's daughter, under the Regency of her mother, excited expectations among liberty-loving people in the British dominions, very different from those of the dreary round of Spanish despotism, which it was hoped had ended for ever.

At Queen Victoria's accession the most disturbed part of her colonial dominions was Canada. What was called Lower Canada was French, and had been ceded to England at the Peace after the Seven Years' war in 1763. There had been other acquisitions half a century before at the earlier settlement of Europe by the Peace of Utrecht, when Queen Anne's last Tory Ministry was accused, through jealousy by the Whigs and Lord Marlborough, of betraying British interests to France, then and long afterwards regarded as our natural enemy. For a great many years the British and French races in Canada might have lived under one sceptre. They did not, however, mingle. The country was very little known beyond the two recognised centres, North and South, Upper and Lower. The Government at home had other things to do than to think of Canada. The pedantic George Grenville, and afterwards the versatile Charles Towns-

hend, adopted a scheme of taxing the American colonies under the pretext of reimbursing Great Britain some of the expenses of the late war. This unhappy step, contrary to the English constitutional principle of taxation and representation being associated, led to the most impolitic, and, in its consequences, disastrous war the Government had ever waged. A bitter antagonism was raised between the two great divisions of the Anglo-Saxon race in the Old World and the New. This was not political progress, but very much the reverse.

War was thought to be approaching. The Government, however, can scarcely be said to have made any attempt to avert it by the Boston Port Bill and the Massachusetts Charter Act. In the Session of 1774, in order to prevent the expansion of the New England Colonies the Ministry introduced, and, with some alterations, carried, what was briefly called the Quebec Act. A system of concession to the Catholics of Lower Canada was adopted. They were permitted to take part in the Legislative Council, and to enjoy the free exercise of their religion, which, to a certain extent, became a State institution. Whatever may have been the motives which influenced the Ministers, the Quebec Act must be considered, so far as the dealings between Great Britain and her colonies are concerned, a step in political progress. Edmund Burke was at this time agent for New York, as well as one of the most energetic members of the House of Commons in opposing the colonial policy of the British Government. He had to defend the interests of his colony, of which the Ministers seemed disposed to limit the extent while favouring the new Canadian Province. Of religious freedom for the

Roman Catholic Church in Canada, as elsewhere, Burke at all times approved; but in indignant language he pointed out the inconsistency of Ministers acting so liberally to the French and Catholic Canadians, while enforcing a system of rigorous oppression against the British and Puritan colonies of New England.

Seventeen years after this time the so-called Quebec Act had to be altered, and the condition of the Province under the measure to be modified. This was during the progress of the French Revolution, which was to change a professedly constitutional Monarchy to a Republic that was to defy the world. It was in discussing the Canada Bill that the public quarrel between Fox and Burke occurred, a quarrel which was never made up.

The difficulties of governing French Canada under ecclesiastical as well as civic rule, while the old loyalist emigrants and the recent settlers represented such different ideas, were very great. They were not overcome when Queen Victoria began her reign. There was a rebellion. The Government sent out the restless, and Radical Lord Durham, as Governor-General, to solve the difficult problem. He did not solve it: he had even prematurely to give up the task. But his recommendation to reunite Upper and Lower Canada was not long afterwards adopted.

Canada, however, continued steadily to advance in commercial prosperity. Notwithstanding difficulties, it profited by the Free Trade policy and the repeal of the Navigation Laws. There was a party in favour of annexation to the United States: but it could make no head. The two antagonistic races in Canada were, indeed, as yet far from being reconciled: they had many prejudices and racial antipathies

to overcome. The discovery of gold in British Columbia, and of coal on Vancouver Island, did much to break down local prejudices. The various Canadian Railways, the Grand Trunk, the line connecting Georgian Bay with Toronto, the Great Western, the Intercolonial, and, much later, the Canadian Pacific Railways, greatly contributed to the development of the territories, which seemed so far apart, and, in certain districts, were looked upon as a kind of no man's land. The progress of Canada is indeed an interesting study through the whole course of the century. With many obstacles to overcome Canada shows political progress to a most gratifying extent. The British colonists and the French Canadians may be said, in Coleridge's language, for many years to have been separated by the whole diameter of being. To a union there were sectarian obstacles of a very formidable character. But by slow degrees the obstacles almost insensibly gave way: Canada might say with a well known character that she "grewed." This is an interesting study for a statesman: more interesting, indeed, than the study of some States of much greater pretensions. The distinction of Upper and Lower Canada, whether separate or united, may be said to have disappeared when the confederation of the British Colonies of North America was formed by the British North America Act of 1867, thirty years after Her Majesty had ascended the throne. The so-called Dominion of Canada, formed originally of Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, soon attracted within the Union other outlying territories. Newfoundland alone remains out: this will not continue, we may be well assured for another century.

In the formation of the Dominion there was a grati-

fiying novelty, for to all intents and purposes the colonies made their own confederation. Its origin was Canadian, and not British. It was not the work of a British government, or of a British parliament. They looked on, and accepted what the North American colonies, so widely different from one another, did by themselves. The Dominion was approved of at home, and ratified by the Parliament at Westminster. This was the beginning of similar movements in other British colonies, gradually developed in the future years of progress, and tending to the formation of one great Federation in the century just begun.

It was fortunate that the Dominion was thus established just before Lord Dufferin became the Governor-General, Her Majesty's Viceroy in Canada. His Lordship has had more experience of the Empire, and of its relations with foreign governments, than any living statesman, or than any one who ever lived. His varied experience in many lands has been compared to that of Ulysses in the ancient world. He has been eminently a representative of peace and union. It has been his rule in life to see everything, as far as possible, with his own eyes. When, as a young man just of age, he came into possession of his Irish estate at Clandeboy, he visited every farm, it might be said every house, in order to make himself fully acquainted with the people of whom he had become the landlord. He did not content himself with listening to the representations of agents. As Governor-General of Canada he acted in a similar spirit. As opportunities were afforded, he went through vast territories in which no representative of the Queen had ever before set foot. His knowledge, therefore, became personal and familiar. At Tuscarora he replied to the addresses

of representatives of six nations who prided themselves on being the old allies of the British Crown. On returning from his Western expedition, Lord Dufferin, at a banquet of the Toronto Club, said: "So far from this gift of autonomy having brought about any divergence of aim or aspiration on either side, every reader of our annals must be well aware that the sentiments of Canada towards Great Britain are infinitely more friendly now, than in those earlier days, when the political intercourse of the two countries was disturbed and complicated by an excessive and untoward tutelage: that never was Canada more united, than at present in sympathy of purpose, and unity of interest with the Mother Country, never more at one with her in social habits and tone of thought, more proud of her claim to share in the heritage of England's past, more ready to accept whatever obligations may be imposed upon her by her partnership in the future fortunes of the Empire."*

At Rat River, Manitoba, he replied to an address of the Mennonite settlers, a religious sect who had left Southern Russia to avoid the Tsar's military service. A month later he had also to reply to an address from the Icelandic settlers at Gimli, Keewatin, on Lake Winnipeg. They appealed to his recollections of his yachting expedition, of which in the volume "Letters from High Latitudes" there is so interesting a record. Lord Dufferin in addressing those settlers reminded them that "in your own country none of you had ever seen a tree, a cornfield, or a road." They had, therefore, at first to learn a great deal from the Canadian colonists engaged in felling timber, ploughing land, and constructing highways.

*Lord Dufferin's *Speeches and Addresses*. Page 161.

Before he left Canada Lord Dufferin was complimented on the series of addresses he had delivered during the term of his Governor-Generalship. They are still worthy of careful attention by those who would watch Canadian development. His speeches produced a great effect, which has indeed been permanent. They were delivered by the right man, and at the right time. They did as much as any spoken words could do to consolidate the Dominion, to make the Canadians united among themselves, and thoroughly loyal to the Queen and to the Empire. Political progress was stimulated as it had never been before in the extensive regions which were gradually becoming known. On first arriving in Canada Lord Dufferin was struck by what appeared to be its backwardness. A closer acquaintance with the country in some measure altered this impression, by showing him how much there was admitting of great expansion. Canada cannot be judged either by what was considered Upper or Lower Canada at the time of the Queen's accession, or by what was at first popularly considered the Dominion. The country is much more extensive: it comprehends a still wider range of progress. Lord Dufferin's Governor-Generalship opened the eyes of the colonists to what might be done in the not remote future. Before he laid down his office, after holding it for six years, he had shown the Canadians the promised land. During this time a friendly feeling had grown up between Canada and the United States. The Fishery award terminated an unpleasant dispute, and all thoughts of annexation had been abandoned at Washington, and at New York, where Lord Dufferin himself had been cordially welcomed. Between Canada and Ulster there has been something of a family attach-

ment. No inconsiderable number of British colonists in North America have been Ulster men. In a speech delivered at Belfast, on returning from his Governor-Generalship, Lord Dufferin uttered the following words, which were much applauded by his entertainers: "From early days I have always believed in our colonial future, and my official experience has confirmed my conviction that if England will only be true to herself, and to those she has sent forth to establish the language, the law, the liberties, the manfulness, the domestic peace of Britain over the world's surface: if she will but countenance and encourage them in maintaining their birthright as her sons: if she will only treat them in an affectionate, and sympathetic spirit: this famous Empire of ours, which is constantly asserting itself with accumulating vigour in either hemisphere, and in every clime, will find the associated realms which compose it daily growing more disposed to recognise their unity, to take a pride in their common origin and antecedents, to draw more closely together the bonds which bind them to each other and to the Mother Country, to oppose in calamity and danger a still more solid front to every foe, and to preserve sacred and intact in every quarter of the globe, with an ever deepening conviction of their superiority, the principles of well-balanced monarchical constitution, which the past experience, and the current experiments of mankind, prove to be the best fitted to secure well ordered personal liberty and true Parliamentary Government."

Here a broad colonial policy was shadowed forth not only for Canada, but for the whole British colonial Empire. It has been more or less realised as the years have passed. This was, indeed, sounding

the keynote of political progress, not only for the century, but it may be for centuries to come. What was thus said of England's Empire on the 26th of November, 1870, might then to a great extent have been regarded as prophetic. The prophecies were in some twenty-one years to become facts; facts, however, still admitting of abundant growth, of great Imperial expansion, with the colonies gathered more closely round Queen Victoria's throne, as representing the unity of the people in many lands, and over many seas.

Turning to Foreign Affairs a somewhat painful contrast may be found. In them for many years political progress, in the best sense of the word, cannot easily be discerned. The Holy Alliance still continued, in the last year of William the Fourth's reign, and the first year of Queen Victoria's, more or less to assert itself. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia, after the naval battle of Navarino, and the Treaty of Adrianople, adopted the policy of endeavoring to extend his power over Turkey. He resented the appointment as ambassador to Russia of Sir Stratford Canning, whom he justly regarded as opposed to his pretensions. The Emperor found himself in direct opposition to Lord Palmerston, who was becoming more friendly to Turkey than he had been before he was Foreign Minister. Louis Philippe and his government professed, though they did not feel, great friendship for the British Liberal Administration. The French occupation of Algiers took place under a pledge that it was to be only temporary. This was almost simultaneous with the fall of Charles the Tenth, and the establishment of Louis Philippe's throne. Mehemet Ali, after having assisted the Sultan against Greece, began to aspire to be an independent ruler in Egypt and Syria, while France ad-

vanced the pretensions of Napoleon the First in those countries. In direct disregard of the declaration of the military Powers which had carried out the three partitions of Poland, Cracow, so far from being maintained in freedom, was occupied by the armies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Foreign Affairs became most complicated, and Lord Palmerston, as a Liberal Foreign Minister, warmly supported at the time by Lord John Russell, though not by all the members of the Cabinet, had what were thought almost insurmountable obstacles to overcome.

For a time the struggle seemed unequal. Russia by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi suddenly acquired rights to enter the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, denied by the Porte to Powers of the Mediterranean. In the Peninsula an English fleet co-operated with the youthful constitutional queens, Isabella and Donna Maria, in asserting something of constitutional freedom. The suspension of the Foreign Enlistment Act allowed an English Brigade to be formed for co-operation with those who were asserting the right to give effect to the wishes of the people. In Western Europe, at least, the old theory of the Divine Right of Kings seemed to be losing much of its traditional influence. There was political progress, even if it were somewhat slow and doubtful.

Turkey was soon threatened by Russia on the one side, and by Mehemet Ali on the other. To protect the independence of the Sultan against his disobedient vassal aspiring to the sovereignty of both Egypt and Syria, was the last work of Lord Palmerston, as Foreign Minister, before the fall of the Melbourne Administration upon the vote of want of confidence carried by Sir Robert Peel in July, 1841. England had begun to be regarded as the friend of Turkey.

This change was the more remarkable because it was brought about by a Liberal Minister, somewhat doubtfully supported by many of his colleagues. During the previous year M. Thiers had become Prime Minister of France. He encouraged Mehemet Ali's designs, which he thought could be carried out, independently of the Sultan, under a French Protectorate.

This may be regarded as the beginning of the partition of the Turkish Empire. Napoleon had been checked in Syria by the British: but not from any love at that time of Turkey and her integrity. Before the Reform Era England had done what she could to set up the comparatively small State of Greece, and even to find for it a King. It had not been the policy of France to support the Sultan's authority either in Syria or Egypt, a fact which her public men and newspapers in recent years appear to have quite forgotten. M. Guizot, the philosophical, represented Louis Philippe's government at the Court of St. James. After a long delay on the part of M. Thiers and his colleagues to consent to any intervention against Mehemet Ali, M. Guizot was informed that a Quadruple Alliance had been signed by Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England, for action against the Sultan's disobedient and ambitious vassal.

On learning of the Quadruple Alliance, which had been agreed to without his knowledge, M. Thiers was furious. His ambition and his vanity were both deeply interested. He made great preparations for war, and a collision between France and England seemed imminent; though Louis Philippe is reported to have said: "So long as I am king there shall be no war between the two countries." But had the action of the British, Austrian, and Turkish fleets

been slow it might have been difficult to avoid hostilities with France. The Porte had formally declared Mehemet Ali to be deposed from the Pashalic of Egypt, a step of which Lord Palmerston disapproved. The coasts of Syria and Egypt were blockaded, or at least declared to be. Beyrout was bombarded, and Soliman Pasha with his Egyptian troops obliged to leave the town. Sidon was taken by storm, and Commodore Charles Napier then marched into the mountains. The Lebanon was free from the army of Ibrahim Pasha, the eldest son of Mehemet Ali, who, to M. Thiers' astonishment, became a fugitive and sought refuge in France. St. Jean d'Acre, which had been triumphantly defended against Napoleon in 1799 by Sir Sidney Smith, and on which the great conjurer had said the fate of the East depended, was captured by the British fleet after a three hours' bombardment.

Never was a public man more humiliated than M. Thiers, Prime Minister of France, appeared to be in the face of the world. Long before the final blow at Mehemet Ali had been struck, M. Thiers wished to send the French fleet to Alexandria to give a moral support to the nominally deposed Pasha of Egypt. But this Louis Philippe repeatedly refused to sanction. The Government resigned. M. Guizot, supposed to be the friend of England, became Foreign Secretary, and Marshal Soult Minister of War and President of the Council.

This arrangement was supposed to be made in the interests of peace. But when the news of the capture of St. Jean d'Acre reached Paris, there was much excitement, and loud demands for war with perfidious Albion. But wiser counsels prevailed. Supported by the King, M. Guizot, who was taunt-

ingly called "The Englishman," strove successfully to preserve the peace.

Efforts were made to put both the French people and the French Government in a good humour. This was partially effected by the treaty of the 13th of July, 1841, to which France was a party, not being shut out in the cold as by the Quadruple Alliance of the previous year. England had agreed to allow the Dardanelles, which she had previously forced, to remain absolutely under the control of the Porte, and to send no ships into the Straits without Turkey's express consent. The other Powers took the same engagement, Russia positively renouncing any intention of asserting an exclusive ascendancy. This was an utter abandonment of the one-sided treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi. Turkey was taken under the protection of Europe, marking an era in the Turkish question.

Can this change be regarded as showing satisfactory indications of political progress? Was it progress or retrogression? On this question there may still be very decided differences of opinion. In 1828, before the Reform Era, Prince Metternich had a design of placing the integrity of the Turkish Empire under the public guarantee of the great European States. This had now been done. It may be maintained, indeed, that the treaty of 1841 did not prevent war some thirteen years afterwards, and that it did not contain any guarantees against Turkish misgovernment. Attention was directed to this by Mr. Urquhart, who had been Secretary to the British Embassy at Constantinople, and who for many subsequent years saw the hand of Russia in all Lord Palmerston's Foreign Policy. This became with him a fixed idea. It was indeed absurd.

The Quadruple Alliance of 1840, and the treaty to

which France was a party the following year, had for the time a pacific effect. They at least staved off war. As in the first year of his Foreign Secretaryship Lord Palmerston was told that if he had the pen of an angel all the protocols he wrote could not preserve the peace on the disruption of Holland and Belgium, so just as his Foreign Secretaryship, except for a brief interval, was closing, it had been prophesied that war between France and England on the Turkish question could not be avoided. It was, however, avoided. That M. Thiers felt a bitter resentment at the manner in which he had been treated, can scarcely be doubted. But he could not give it effect. In the session after Peel's new administration was formed, Lord Stanley, who had returned to his old office of Secretary for the Colonies, assailed Lord Palmerston's Foreign policy with some bitterness. Throughout the Syrian and Egyptian crisis Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington had been guarded: and they expressed no disapprobation of the two treaties which had been framed with the direct object of preserving the integrity of the Turkish Empire.

A grave question arises. Was this policy really wise? It was undoubtedly thought to be so at the time. Much less was then known of Turkey, and of countries nearer Great Britain, than now. The broad lines of political morality, and of political progress had not yet been distinctly laid down. Oppressed nations did not excite the same amount of sympathy that they do now. Between a considerable portion of the British people, the Conservatives who supported Sir Robert Peel and his Government, and the despotic powers of the continent, there was supposed to be more or less of an alliance against the growing spirit of popular freedom. Some years later,

when Mr. Gladstone published his celebrated *Letters to Lord Aberdeen*,* as a protest against the tyranny of the King of Naples, he plainly admitted that there was a sympathy between the British Conservatives and the continental monarchies opposed to the development of constitutional government in Europe, and; it may be presumed, throughout the world.

But Russia and other Powers were now looking covetously towards Turkey. The young Sultan was thought to be struggling under great difficulties; and though England had aided in providing Greece with a King, Turkey began to be regarded by the British as a friend and not as an oppressor. Edmund Burke had long before declared in memorable language that he did not wish well to the Porte, that he regarded it as incorrigible, and that those who attempted to keep it as it was, deserved the condemnation, and even the curses of posterity. He would not have looked upon an attempt to bolster up the Turkish Empire as an indication of political progress: neither in his latest years could Mr. Gladstone: very much the reverse.

* See the first of Mr. Gladstone's *Letters to Lord Aberdeen*.

CHAPTER VI.

ECONOMIC POLICY: FREE TRADE.

ON the 27th of August, 1841, just after the treaty of the Five Powers with respect to Turkey had been signed, Lord Melbourne and his colleagues were defeated, by a majority of ninety-one, on an amendment to the Address. This was after having appealed to the country, not on the Turkish question, but on an economic one. The question of the maintenance of the Corn Laws had been raised. Lord John Russell, whose reputation had greatly increased during the years he had been the Leader of the House of Commons in Lord Melbourne's Government, during the last year of office under that administration was supposed to be in favour of removing some of the restrictions on the importation of foreign corn. Neither he nor his colleagues could be called free traders when, after a defeat by a majority of one, they appealed to the country in favour of a fixed duty instead of the sliding scale which Sir Robert Peel and the Conservatives were known to support. A sliding scale had been the Conservative policy many years before, and in 1829, when it was sought to conciliate the artisans in the great towns by an alteration of the Corn Laws. The free trade agitation had gone on ever since. The Anti-Corn Law League had been formed in Manchester, on the 18th of September, 1838, by Charles Villiers, M. P., Cobden and Bright, who were then

comparatively unknown, and by numerous others, who were looked down upon as manufacturers, even tradesmen, and were superciliously called the Manchester men.

Sir Robert Peel's Government of 1841 was undoubtedly formed to continue a Protectionist policy. This it is quite vain to deny. It was admitted by Peel himself. Dependent as the Ministry was on the country gentlemen, thoroughly interested in what Mr. Disraeli at their head afterwards called the Land of England, it could not have professed anything but a protectionist as against a free trade policy. Mr. Gladstone became Vice-President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint. He was supposed to be much in the confidence of Sir Robert Peel, who had given him a Secretaryship of the Treasury on forming his short lived administration in 1834. According to Mr. Disraeli, before he became his keen assailant, Peel was at that time a great man in a great position, summoned from Rome to govern England.

As Mr. Gladstone soon afterwards began his tariff experiments, which may be said to have been the pioneers of a free trade policy, what he said on taking office has very considerable significance. On being re-elected by his constituents he stated that the British farmer might depend on adequate protection to his industry, that protection was to be secured by a sliding scale, that the duties might be reduced and the system improved, but that the principle was to be maintained. Words could not be plainer. It is obvious that the newly appointed Vice-President of the Board of Trade spoke not only for himself, but for Sir Robert Peel and his Government. It was to be a Protectionist Government. It was also, of course, to be a Con-

servative Government. Not long afterwards Mr. Disraeli wrote, in "Coningsby," "A Conservative Government, I understand: Tory men, Whig measures."

The last year of Lord Melbourne's administration had been one of financial and commercial depression. There was also much popular restlessness. Chartism embodied the strong, ignorant discontent with government by the middle classes, whose predominance in the State was constituted by the Reform Acts ten years previously. The Free Trade movement and the Chartist movement were essentially distinct; it might be said opposed to each other, though apparently advancing in the same direction. Manhood suffrage; vote by ballot; annual Parliaments; the abolition of the property qualification for members of the House of Commons; payment of the members; and equal electoral districts, were the six points of the Charter. Two of them have since been carried. It is noteworthy that the abolition of the House of Lords, or even its reform, was not one of the points of the Charter. The Free Trade movement, on the other hand, was a middle class agitation against the ascendancy of the landed interest, the country gentlemen and the aristocracy. Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn Law Rhymmer, had no sympathy with the Chartists, and the same may be said of Cobden and Bright.

Before the change of government there had been a serious social insurrection at Newport, in Monmouthshire. Several persons were killed, and a great many were wounded. Three of the rioters were sentenced to death, though the sentences were not carried out. Other disturbances followed, especially in Manchester, and the Free Trade Hall built in that city may be called a monument of Peter-

loo. The new Government upheld against Lord John Russell and the Whigs in Opposition a fixed duty in preference to a sliding scale: but it has been said with some truth that the two proposals from a Protectionist point of view amounted to very much the same thing. There was, however, a difference. This was admitted by Cobden, who had been returned to Parliament at the recent general election, when he stated that Lord John Russell and his colleagues on the front Opposition Bench went three-fourths of the way. Free Traders were anxious to proceed. After the bad harvest of the last year of Lord Melbourne's Government, there were some good ones: but they do not appear to have had much effect on the prevailing discontent. The poor man's loaf was said to be heavily taxed. The Corn Laws were popularly regarded as a system of almost devilish iniquity to prevent the labouring classes obtaining cheap bread for their wives, their families, and themselves. It was the vigorous expression of this feeling which made Elliott's Rhymes popular among the masses.

Mr. Gladstone's tariff experiments were being made with characteristic earnestness. In the session of 1842 there was a revised tariff in which several hundred articles were relieved from duties either altogether, or their impositions considerably diminished. These experiments proved to be generally successful. In the following year Mr. Gladstone, as yet a young man of little more than thirty years of age, took the place of Lord Ripon as President of the Board of Trade, with a seat in the Cabinet. At the beginning of 1845 he had completed a second revised tariff: but suddenly resigned because he considered that Sir Robert Peel's proposed increase in the endowment of

Maynooth College was inconsistent with the principles he had expressed in his work on the relations of a Christian Church to a Christian State. The reasons Mr. Gladstone gave for his retirement were by many people declared to be unintelligible, the more so when it was found that he could support as a private member what he felt himself unable to vote for as a Minister. During the great changes which followed, Mr. Gladstone, differing from his noble patron, the Duke of Newcastle, remained out of office: while Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues had to carry out an Anti-Protectionist policy, to which on entering office after the defeat of Lord Melbourne they were understood to be resolutely opposed.

The agitation for the Repeal of the Corn Laws was making great progress. Bright had been returned to the House of Commons for the cathedral city of Durham, and joined his friends Villiers and Cobden. They became a very formidable phalanx. Sir Robert Peel on the Treasury Bench listened to arguments he was unable to refute. In the summer there were alarming rumours of the utter failure of the Irish potato crop. There was great distress in England; but in Ireland, where the population had increased by several millions since the Union, the peasants were threatened with absolute starvation.

What was to be done? If it had not been for the Irish famine, which rendered immediate measures necessary, Peel would have prepared his party gradually for the inevitable change.* But the Irish famine forced the Prime Minister's hand. Lord John

*See *Life of the Prince Consort* by Theodore Martin. Volume 1. Page 317.

Russell had no inconsiderable part in hastening the decision. He was spending the autumn in Scotland when he became convinced that the Corn Laws could no longer be retained, that their absolute repeal was inevitable. His Fixed Duty as well as Sir Robert Peel's Sliding Scale, in the presence of the great storm across the Irish sea, were evidently going by the board. It would be necessary to open the ports, and once opened, how could they in the presence of the formidable agitation of the Anti-Corn Law League be again closed? The new Free Trade era had begun. Lord John Russell in his celebrated letter to his constituents, the forerunner of other though less successful letters from the same pen, announced that the hour of repeal had struck. "The corn barometer," he wrote, "points to fair, while the ship is bending under a storm."

Not only the Protectionist Ship, but Sir Robert Peel's powerful Government were bending under the storm. Early in November the Prime Minister sought to induce his colleagues to open the ports for the admission of foreign grain, either by an Order in Council, or by summoning Parliament for the object. He was overruled by a large majority of the Cabinet, Lord Stanley and the Duke of Wellington being very decidedly opposed to the step. The appearance of Lord John Russell's letter on the 22nd of November, as Sir Robert himself afterwards acknowledged, made the position of the Government much more difficult. Three days afterwards another Cabinet Council was held. The Duke of Wellington was now prepared to support the Prime Minister, on the ground that the Queen's Government must be carried on. But the threatened resignations of the Duke of Buccleuch and Lord Stanley, convinced Sir

Robert that under the circumstances he could not carry on the government. Early in December he asked the Queen to relieve him of his ministerial duties, which he felt he could no longer discharge with advantage to Her Majesty's Service.

Lord John Russell was still in Edinburgh when he received the Queen's command to form an administration, which was avowedly to undertake the Repeal of the Corn Laws. That repeal had become inevitable. An unexpected announcement in *The Times* that Sir Robert Peel had himself become a convert to the policy, produced a great sensation. It was received by many of the supporters of Peel and his Government with both incredulity and rage. They were not of course surprised, they said, at anything Lord John Russell might do,—but of Sir Robert Peel better things were expected. The change practically meant not only the downfall of Peel's Government, but of the Conservative party so far as it depended on the country gentlemen, and on a Protectionist policy.

Lord John Russell and the Whigs would have had the credit of carrying the Repeal of the Corn Laws, as well as other Free Trade measures, had it not been for an unexpected obstacle to the formation of a new government. Lord Grey, the eldest son of the distinguished statesman whose name is especially connected with the Reform Bill of 1831-32, had only succeeded his father in his Peerage a few months previously. While bearing the title of Lord Howick he had been appointed Under-Secretary of the Colonies in his father's Ministry, but soon gave evidence of his impracticable disposition by resigning because the Cabinet would not support the immediate emancipation of the slaves. In Lord Melbourne's Government Lord

Howick became Secretary for War. Ten years later, when Lord John Russell undertook to form a Ministry Lord Howick, who had now become Earl Grey, refused to take office because Lord Palmerston was again to be Foreign Secretary. Lord Grey objected to the reappointment of Palmerston on the ground that he had acted with the other Powers of the Quadruple alliance in driving Mehemet Ali from Syria, and defeating M. Thiers' policy in the East, and that to allow him to return to the Foreign Office would be regarded by the French Government with distrust and hostility. The fact that persistence in this objection to Lord Palmerston prevented Lord John Russell from carrying out the task he had undertaken by the Queen's command, led to the third Earl Grey being regarded as a statesman of the first importance, who could not be dispensed with by a Whig or Liberal Cabinet.

Here, I may be excused for quoting a letter to myself in reply to some observations I made on the action of Earl Grey in an early work entitled "Thirty Years of Foreign Policy,"—a history of the Secretaryship of the Earl of Aberdeen. My text was the statement made by Lord Aberdeen, in announcing the policy of his Government, on the 27th of December, 1852. The Prime Minister's words, which may be regarded as historical, were: "The truth is, my Lords, that, though there may have been differences in the execution according to the different hands entrusted with the direction of affairs, the principles of the foreign policy of this country have for the last Thirty Years been the same."

This sentence caused much comment, and decided differences of opinion. In foreign affairs many people

considered that Lord Palmerston represented Political Progress, and Lord Aberdeen Political Retrogression. In my volume on "Thirty Years of Foreign Policy," referring to Lord Grey's opposition to Lord Palmerston again becoming Foreign Secretary, I wrote: "It appeared that there was at least one hereditary Whig statesman who could not appreciate the value of Lord Palmerston's claim to be once more Foreign Secretary, and who set about resisting his pretensions. The son of the great Prime Minister of the great Reform Bill, could not, of course, suppose that he would ever be excluded from a Liberal Ministry. It seemed impossible to do without Lord Grey: but very easy to do without Lord Palmerston. This singular delusion was persisted in, and Lord John Russell found himself obliged to relinquish the task which he had conscientiously undertaken. This failure, had it not been for the *intrigue* against one who had shown so much ability, both in office and in opposition, and whose only crimes were his success and his patriotism, was not much to be regretted. It was better that Sir Robert Peel should again return to office, and complete the work he had begun."

As some time before I had consulted Macaulay, then residing in the Albany, on an earlier publication, I sent him a copy of my new volume. A few days afterwards I received from the brilliant essayist and historian a letter, from which, in justice to the memory of the third Earl Grey, I give the following sentences. Mr. Macaulay wrote to me: "You are very unjust to couple Earl Grey's name with the word '*intrigue*.' No person disapproved of his conduct at that time more than I did. But I must say that it was eminently straightforward conduct. There is not a more straight-

forward, nor more intrepid nature in the world. I owe him this testimony." So it stands written, and now at last sees the light. No person will be disposed to question this testimony from so unexceptionable a source. When Lord John Russell was able to form a government, on the defeat of Sir Robert Peel's Irish Coercion Bill almost immediately after the repeal of the Corn Laws, Lord Grey vanquished his scruples against taking office with Lord Palmerston as Foreign Minister, and became Secretary of State for the Colonies. He was not at all popular as Secretary for the Colonies. He conceded to them Free Trade, so far as allowing them to introduce their goods into British markets free of duties. But on the other hand Lord Grey and his colleagues allowed the Colonies to tax British products as though Great Britain were a foreign country. This was one sided Free Trade. The great scheme of Imperial Federation which is now gradually being developed was still in the far distance.

When Lord John Russell and his colleagues were ostentatiously carrying out their policy, Cobden and other thorough-going Free Traders confidently predicted that the nations of the world, on seeing the advantages this policy had conferred on the United Kingdom, would emulously follow in the same direction. It was said that in twelve months after the repeal of the Navigation Laws, and the repeal of all duties imposed merely for the purpose of protection, there would be a great change. A change there was, but not in the manner predicted. Lord John Russell himself confessed that, with respect to the adoption of a Free Trade policy by other Governments, he was grievously disappointed. Up to the present time dis-

appointment may be said to have continued. Cobden, on a remarkable occasion, said: "To buy in the cheapest market and to sell in the dearest, what is there to shock us in this? It is acting on the Christian precept of doing unto others as you would wish them to do unto you." On this point there may still be, as there was when those words were uttered, some differences of opinion. Professedly Christian nations have not yet become converts to Free Trade: but it can scarcely be disputed that as a general principle it represents commercial and political progress in the best sense of the words.

Just before Sir Robert Peel's Protectionist policy had become untenable, in consequence of the Irish famine, Macaulay delivered a remarkable speech in the House of Commons, on the second reading of the Bill increasing the grant to Maynooth. At the beginning of the debate, Mr. Disraeli called on the Whigs to vote against the measure without inquiring into its merits, because of the men who had brought it forward. This Macaulay, and his political friends, refused to do even if it led, as proved to be the case, to the loss of his seat in the House of Commons. Macaulay, who was one of the members for the City of Edinburgh, said: "It is of the highest importance that the world should not be under the impression that a statesman is a person who, when he is out will profess and promise anything in order to get in, and who when he is in, will forget all that he professed and promised when he was out." This he regarded as most injurious to the character of public men, and to that public morality, on which some people are still so old fashioned as to believe all sound political progress must depend.

The increased grant to Maynooth College was represented as the sudden adoption of a conciliatory policy towards Ireland, after the virtual failure of the prosecution of O'Connell by the Government. Consistency was still considered to be a virtue in statesmen. Sir Robert Peel was reminded of his sudden change of opinion on the question of Catholic Emancipation. A few months afterwards, when he and several of his colleagues became Free Traders, and repealed the Corn Laws which they were thought to have entered office to maintain, he was again reminded of having altered his course. This was thought to have become characteristic of what began to be called the Peelite party, as distinguished from the Conservative Party of which Lord Derby, Lord George Bentinck, and Mr. Disraeli, became the leaders. Lord George Bentinck accused Sir Robert Peel of having caused the death of Mr. Canning by opposing his emancipation policy, and afterwards being the very minister who carried Catholic Emancipation. It is not necessary to enter into these personal questions. A perseverance in error, when that perseverance would be injurious to country and Empire could scarcely be justifiable. But we may still believe that foresight, that prescience, is a most desirable virtue, and that in a great statesman the faculty, as Shakespeare has written, of sounding "the bottom of the aftertimes" cannot be too highly estimated. When Burke was accused of inconsistency in taking the course he did in condemnation of the French Revolution, he wrote of himself in the "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs": "I believe if he could venture to value himself upon anything, it is on the virtue of consistency he could

value himself most. Strip him of this, and you leave him naked indeed."

It is evident that the great statesman and philosopher, the most far-sighted of public men, considered consistency one of the greatest of political virtues. It was afterwards said that the French Revolution had made him a Tory, as it made Alfieri a courtier. How far did Burke in his old age differ from the modern Liberals under Lord John Russell when they supported the increased grant to Maynooth, and after their leader found himself unable to accomplish the task supported Sir Robert in repealing the Corn Laws? Burke, as all who have read his letters to Dr. Hussey will understand, was one of the principal advisers of the original grant to Maynooth in 1795. He was a Free Trader, as he had been from the time he first took his seat in Parliament, in 1766. He had agreed with Adam Smith before the great work on "The Wealth of Nations," which had been shown to him in confidence, had been published. Charles Fox on the other hand confessed long afterwards that there was something in the great economical question he could not even understand. As "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity," published in 1795, show, Burke, while urging on Ministers the advisability of endowing Maynooth College, was encouraging the Government to act on free trade principles. To the last hour of his life he was an earnest supporter of Catholic Emancipation. Whether he might, or might not, have approved of the Act of Union, he had plainly stated that without Catholic Emancipation a political and legislative union between the two countries was impossible. This was not being a Tory, as probably Macaulay, who supported the increased Maynooth

grant at the sacrifice of his seat in Parliament, would have admitted. The French Revolution could not have made Burke an opponent of Parliamentary Reform, for he had been opposed to it during his whole political life. There may still be a question whether such a measure as that carried by the Whigs under the leadership of the second Lord Grey, would have been advantageous in 1780, when Burke's London house was in danger of being destroyed by the Gordon rioters.

Sir Robert Peel in endowing denominational Maynooth, laid the foundations of the non-sectarian Queen's University, with its three Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway. Mr. Stanley, who became both a Protectionist and Conservative, when a Whig, and Chief Secretary for Ireland, had encouraged Irish National Education on similar lines. Excellent as were Queen's University and its colleges in intention, they were opposed to the denominational spirit both of many members of the Church of England, and of the Irish Roman Catholic prelates. From the first the colleges were denounced as godless by so representative a Churchman as Sir Robert Inglis, one of the members for Oxford University. For many years the Irish National Schools, indirectly at least, had become more and more denominational. Schools for the most part under clerical management, as many people believe, could scarcely be otherwise than denominational. On this question there has been a great controversy which cannot yet be considered settled. Leaders of both English parties in dealing with it, have acted with considerable inconsistency, because they have not been able to control the prejudices of their followers.

Lord John Russell's administration, succeeding to power after the defeat of Sir Robert Peel by a combination of the discontented Protectionists, Liberals, and Irish Repealers, had to pursue a tentative policy. The first duty of the Government was to do what they could to remedy the evils produced by the Irish famine. This admitted of no delay, and to it all other political objects became more or less secondary. In the spring of 1847 the government asked for a grant of a hundred thousand pounds for the education of the people. This was a very modest sum. It was one of many similar applications, which year by year gradually increased in amount, until a more complete system was established in 1870 under what was called the Elementary Education Act of England and Wales, the central authority residing in the Education Department, or Committee of Council on Education. The hundred thousand pounds of 1847 has now grown to more than eight and three quarter millions a year for England and Wales, and more than eleven and a quarter millions for the United Kingdom, independently of endowments, school fees, local rates, and voluntary subscriptions, which also have reached a very large sum. On this subject it is not necessary to enter into details. But it is curious on looking back to 1847 to find English Radical members objecting to State Education on principle, and to the small grant of a hundred thousand pounds as likely to add dangerously to the influence of the Crown. In such objections very little progress can be discerned, even among those who professed to be advanced Liberals. It was shown, indeed, that the Puritans, who left England in the reign of Charles the First to seek freedom in what was called a desert, had from the first sought to set up a good system of popular

education; and that after the United States had become independent, Washington, who may be regarded as the founder of the great American Republic, had earnestly advised carrying out this policy on the broadest lines.

From the very beginning of the century tentative efforts with respect to popular education had been made. But it was not until 1847 that the business can be said seriously to have been undertaken by a British government, as a great work of social reform. For this Lord John Russell, the Prime Minister, deserves much credit. Macaulay, whose Parliamentary career was to be suspended by the defeat at Edinburgh he had anticipated in consequence of his support of the increased Maynooth grant, maintained that those who had the right to hang had the right to educate, and appealed to posterity against those opposed to this reform,—great in principle, though small if the amount of popular ignorance which had ultimately to be grappled with were considered. John Arthur Roebuck, in replying to the historian's speech, said Macaulay was justified in appealing to posterity because he could reach it: but this did not render him (Roebuck) as a representative of Bath more favourable to the measure. Roebuck, who like Macaulay was defeated at the General Election, declared that for inflicting defeat upon him the Dissenters of Bath were unworthy of freedom.

One of the most important measures passed by the new House of Commons was an act limiting the labour of women and young people between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, employed in factories, to ten hours a day. The reform was one for which Lord Ashley, afterwards so well known as the philanthropic Earl

of Shaftesbury, had long and earnestly laboured. Public attention was gradually being awakened to the necessity of State regulation and supervision over industries, and during the century a long series of Acts, designed to protect the health of all labourers in factories and workshops, have been passed. Of these the first, the Health and Morals Act of 1802, was brought forward by Sir Robert Peel, the elder; the Second Factory Act of 1819, which only applied to cotton-mills, prohibited the employment of all children under nine, and restricted for those between the ages of nine and sixteen, the hours of labour to twelve, night work being prohibited. By Lord Althorp's Act of 1833 the half-time system for children between nine and thirteen was made law, with compulsory education of the children out of work hours. At this stage the question was taken up by Lord Ashley, who, in spite of the indifference of Sir Robert Peel, greatly extended the protection of the legislature over the helpless. By the Act of 1844, adult women were first brought under the Factory Acts, and their hours of work limited to twelve a day. The working hours of children under thirteen were further reduced, and the time they were to be daily under instruction increased. Unfortunately at the General Election, Lord Ashley lost his seat, and was not present in the House of Commons to support Mr. Fielden's new bill, in which he felt so keen an interest. But the cause was one in which he never ceased to labour, and he was subsequently Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry, which ten years later recommended the extension of the measure passed by the Government of Lord John Russell.

Some of the most earnest Free Traders were the

most decided opponents of the Factories Act. They represented it as retrogressive, an interference with Free Trade, which they alleged to be opposed to all State interference with the hours of labour, even for women and children, and to all restrictions on private agreements between employers and employed. It can scarcely be said that many of the advanced Liberals who opposed this policy, which in subsequent years, like the Education Act, was to be carried so much further, appear on looking back to any great advantage. They applied the doctrine of *laissez faire* to social questions which required to be dealt with in the interests of millions, and to problems which were thoroughly social though not identified with ordinary socialism.

It has been stated that the Conservatives and Protectionists supported the Education Act and the Factories Act out of jealousy of Free Traders, who were opposed to those measures. Some of them may have been actuated by this motive; but it would be unjust to assume that many of them had not a higher one. Both measures have been greatly extended. This would scarcely have been the case had their principles in application not been found thoroughly beneficial.

The Poor Law Commission became a Ministerial Department, and there were new rules framed with respect to the management of workhouses, and the meetings of the Guardians, and other regulations, which at least showed that Lord John Russell and his colleagues were animated by something higher than ordinary political partisanship. The Public Health Act undertook to deal with important social questions of a somewhat analogous character to the Factories

Act. Many people will admit that such measures were real steps in advance, while some of the ecclesiastical questions, which were raised later, certainly cannot be dignified by the name of political progress. The memory of Dr. Hampden, and his appointment to the Bishopric of Hereford, can scarcely be said now to excite interest; and even the Ecclesiastical Titles Act of 1851, while rousing so much bitter antagonism at the time, may be said to have died a natural death. Lord John Russell's Durham letter on this subject stimulated what was called a "No-Popery" cry. It was not a success, like his former letter on the Repeal of the Corn Laws which so greatly contributed to Sir Robert Peel's embarrassment. Mr. Gladstone vehemently opposed the measure prohibiting the use by Roman Catholic bishops of the titles of English Sees. Before it became law it was found that the measure could not be applied to Ireland, and after it had become law it remained a dead letter. In the early Reform days, Lord John Russell had been referred to as, "Johnny who upset the coach:" he was now depicted in *Punch* as "the Naughty Boy who chalked No-Popery on the wall, and then ran away." When the Ecclesiastical Titles Act was removed from the Statute Book in 1871, Mr. Gladstone declared that he had never had anything for it but maledictions. This was quite true. His attitude with respect to the Bill showed that he and some of his Peelite friends were going further and further away from the old Conservative and Protectionist party. After the publication of my first book, "The Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, M. P.: a Literary and Political Biography," I had confidential communications respecting the course Mr. Gladstone might be disposed to take.

Would he remain a Conservative, as the so-called Peelites were still supposed to be, or would he ultimately become the leader of the Liberal party? I was told by one well acquainted with the sentiments of Mrs. Gladstone, that, in her opinion, Mr. Gladstone could not be the leader of the Liberal party, that for taking such a course his Conservative principles and prejudices were much too strong, too deeply rooted in his nature. I presumed to reply: "As long as Mr. Disraeli lives Mr. Gladstone will, I am convinced, never be the leader of the Conservative party." It would not be too much to say that the venerable statesman who has so recently been taken away from the world had as little love for Lord Palmerston as he had for Mr. Disraeli, and that this dislike had then and for a long time afterwards a great deal to do with keeping him one of the representatives of a small third party, which, like other third parties, it has often been declared, could not long maintain itself in an independent position.

CHAPTER VII.

LORD PALMERSTON AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE.

ON returning to the Foreign Office Lord Palmerston had to overcome, as far as possible, the distrust encouraged, if not created by Lord Grey's action, at the end of 1845, in the minds of the King of the French and his principal Ministers. A visit to Paris, contemplated by Lord Palmerston, was strongly encouraged by Mr. Disraeli, who seems at this time to have been on more friendly terms with the Foreign Secretary than with any of his colleagues, or with Sir Robert Peel and his friends. Lord Aberdeen, as Foreign Secretary in Peel's late Administration, had endeavored to conciliate the Citizen King, who was beginning to dislike that title, and to follow in the ways of the House of Bourbon. The question of the marriage of the two daughters of Maria Christina had long been before Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Peel's Government. It had even been discussed during a visit paid by the Queen to Louis Philippe at Eu. It was positively asserted by Lord Palmerston that Louis Philippe had pledged his word as a gentleman to Queen Victoria that he would not put forward one of his sons for the hand either of the young Queen of Spain, or that of her sister.

The King of the French and M. Guizot judged of others by themselves. They suspected that a marriage

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would be arranged between a Prince of the House of Coburg and the Queen of Spain. To thwart the supposed policy of England, on the 28th of August, 1846, only a month after Lord John Russell's Administration was formed, M. Guizot obtained the consent of the young Queen to marry the less capable of her two cousins, Don Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz, and of her sister to marry the Duke de Montpensier. The engagements were announced the next day in the Official Gazette; and the two marriages were celebrated on the 10th of October. The friendly relations which existed between the Governments of France and England were dissolved, never again to be re-established during Louis Philippe's reign. There was a great deal of recrimination: but Lord Aberdeen in a frank and manly letter to M. Guizot vindicated his successor from any breach of faith. He told the French Minister that he might have acted very much as Lord Palmerston had done, that it was absurd to talk of there being in one of the dispatches mention of a Coburg the more or of a France the less. The fact is that the young Queen's mother, Maria Christina, when Lord Aberdeen was at the Foreign Office, had brought forward the Prince of Coburg's name; and M. Guizot afterwards admitted that he wrote, on December 10th, 1845, to the French Minister in Spain to be on his guard, and, as the arrangement was contrary to the policy maintained by France, to defeat the pretensions of the Prince of Coburg, and to propose the Duke de Montpensier either for the hand of the Queen or of the Infanta. This was done notwithstanding Louis Philippe's personal promise to his Royal guest at Eu, and a second promise of a similar character made during the King's visit to Windsor. It was well said at the time: "They who would see high moral-

ity in words may read M. Guizot's speeches: they who would see it glaringly violated may look at it in his facts."

The two Spanish marriages, which excited so much interest at the time, may now be thought worthy of little notice, but in their consequences they had a great deal to do with political progress, though of a very doubtful kind. Their first effect was to sweep away the last vestige of the Kingdom of Poland. At the end of October the King of the French received the Duke and Duchess de Montpensier; and on the 6th of November, a few days afterwards, there was signed by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, a Convention by which the treaties establishing the independence of Cracow were "revoked and suppressed." France and England having been divided on foreign affairs by the Spanish marriages, the spirit of the Holy Alliance was revived by the three Powers. M. Guizot protested: Lord Palmerston protested: but they protested separately and independently. They could no longer act together in the cause of constitutional freedom against the three despotisms that profited by the opportunity. The Queen in opening Parliament for the session of 1847 declared the abolition of Cracow as a free city, and its annexation to Austria, to be a manifest violation of the treaty of Vienna. The fact was one which Prince Metternich in vain attempted to dispute in a manifesto, severely commented upon by Lord Palmerston. Thus the last remnant of Polish independence was destroyed. The act was declared by Lord Palmerston the "dangerous inheritance of a successful wrong,"—language not dissimilar from that in which the first partition of Poland was characterised by Burke in 1772.*

**Annual Register* 1772. Chap. 1. p. p. 1-4.

Though years afterwards Mr. Gladstone plainly implied that the Conservative Party, of which he still considered himself a member, sympathised with the despotic monarchies of the Continent, British Conservatives generally as the year 1847 advanced, became much more moderate and even liberal in their ideas. Mr. Disraeli, indeed, surprised the House of Commons by an elaborate defence of the partition of Poland. But the action of the Austrian Government on the suppression of the insurrection in Silesia, and what has been justly called the bloody massacre in Galicia, with the destruction of Cracow as a political entity, were regarded by even the British country-gentlemen with strong disapproval. Lord John Russell, as Prime Minister, was loudly applauded by both sides when he said in Parliament: "Though in some of the late transactions in Europe our protests have been disregarded, our moral force has been increased and fortified: for there is no treaty either ancient or modern which we have either violated or set aside."*

The continued existence of Cracow as a professedly independent state had long been regarded with impatience by all three despotic Powers. They asserted that the free city kept alive the memory of Poland as an independent Power, and thus encouraged revolution; that as Cracow had only been continued a free city in 1815, because the great military monarchies could not agree as to its disposal, they had a right, a generation afterwards, in defiance of treaties, to incorporate Cracow with Austria. Even Sir Robert Peel, whose foreign policy was not his strong point, spoke contemptuously of the three Powers asserting

*See observations on this subject in "*Thirty Years of Foreign Policy*." Page 380-1.

that "it was necessary to put an end to Cracow as a free city, in order that they might protect themselves from its disturbances." Notwithstanding the efforts of Prince Metternich, representing Austria and other reactionary Powers, the constitutional light was spreading where so long everything had appeared dark.

Even the King of Prussia began to speak as an enlightened ruler; and the new Pope, Pius the Ninth, professed to be a reformer, and on political matters appeared willing to consult Lord Palmerston instead of Catholic sovereigns. This seemed a strange phenomenon. If it were not political progress it had at all events that appearance. The prospect continued to brighten. The Queen of Portugal was kept in constitutional paths by Lord Palmerston, who, it was thought, thus maintained her throne. In Switzerland the existence of the Republic was threatened by the support given by France and Austria to the action of the Catholic Cantons in forming the Sonderbund, a league to enforce education by the Jesuits. But before agreeing to the intervention of the Five Powers Lord Palmerston insisted that the principle upon which action was to be taken, should be clearly defined. Owing to the success of the Diet foreign intervention was averted, and the Sonderbund was dissolved. In Italy at the end of 1847 there was much uneasiness, even under what appeared to be a brilliant sky. But the thunder clouds were gathering, even while patriots were rejoicing at the prospect of freedom and peace. Austria was beginning to experience the result of those designs on Italy against which she had been warned half a century before, by the great Irish Statesman, just as he was sinking into his grave. Her

troops assumed from Ferrara a very menacing attitude to the smaller Italian States. Italian liberals looked to Lord Palmerston for advice, if not substantial aid. Lord Minto was sent on a special mission to Rome, taking Turin and Florence by the way. He was heartily welcomed, and his counsels received with much respect. In February, 1848, the French Monarchy, with its Citizen King, was overthrown almost as suddenly as it had been erected. France, and nearly all Europe, were plunged into the throes of revolution.

Under Louis Philippe, a professedly constitutional sovereign, France had not made the progress with which she had been credited. The enlightened M. Guizot, however admirable in a professorial chair, grievously disappointed public expectations. He lent himself to further the dynastic objects of Louis Philippe in Spain: in Switzerland he encouraged the Sonderbund, which might have caused the disruption of the gallant Republic of the mountaineers: he persisted in maintaining the very narrow franchise in France, when a very moderate reform would have satisfied a large number of French citizens, and have placed his Royal Master's throne on a much broader basis. The King at last offered to concede what he had just before refused. But the sacrifice of his Minister, M. Guizot, did not improve matters. The fatal words "Too late," which have often sounded the knell of governments, sovereigns, and dynasties, were very plainly emphasised. The King fled from Paris, and concealed himself with his Queen at Trouville, until he could make his escape to Newhaven under the name of plain Mr. Smith. He was again a fugitive, an exile, indebted to British hospitality,

muttering as he fled, "Like Charles the Tenth," "Like Charles the Tenth." Thus ended all the schemes, which up to the last had been pursued very much in the spirit of the old Bourbon dynasty.

This was, however, but the beginning of a series of revolutions. A Republic was set up, almost from a newspaper office, in Paris, and once more the brilliant city gave the law to France. The system of centralisation did its work well.

It seems strange now to read an oration delivered in the January of 1848 in the French Chamber of Peers, just five weeks before the fall of Louis Philippe's throne. The Count de Montalembert declared that there was no danger from Italy, from Austria, or from France. There was only one figure in Europe ready to let slip the revolutionary winds. This was the Foreign Secretary of the Queen of England. The Count added: "When noble Peers stand up in this tribune and speak what they think of the Emperor of Austria, and of Prince Metternich, I may surely declare my opinion of Lord Palmerston."*

This speech was much commented upon at the time. It was made the text of many leading articles in England as well as on the Continent. These comments had not ceased when France again became a Republic, and stimulated the revolutionary spirit over the whole of Europe. If this were the work of one man, an English statesman, the condition of continental Europe must indeed have been volcanic. Austria was confronted with great difficulties in the Italian States. The King of Sardinia could not even if he desired, remain neutral. Austria appealed to Lord Palmerston, as the reforming Pope had done.

* See "*Thirty Years of Foreign Policy*," pp. 392-4.

The English statesman, who had been stigmatised as the firebrand of Europe, was asked for protection even by the reactionary monarchies.

This was a strange reversal of the situation. Under the circumstances Lord Minto's moderate advice could not be entertained by the revolutionists, and he had to be recalled. Here again "Too Late" echoed in the ears.

Frederick William the Fourth, King of Prussia, distinguished himself at this time by his long speeches, and his flattery of the populace, who at Berlin called out to him "Hats off," a command he was obliged to obey before leaving his capital. Kings and emperors were, indeed, in an abject position, and yet while sinking so low, sought to rob one another of their dominions. At Frankfort there was a cry for German unity, and of this the King of Prussia sought to take advantage, while at the same time he sought to profit, at the expense of the King of Denmark, by the movement in Schleswig in favour of annexation by the German Confederacy. Schleswig was accordingly invaded. The rebellion of Hungary, which was at last put down by Russian arms, marked another era. Kossuth blamed Lord Palmerston for not undertaking the defence of Hungary. "All I asked of him," said the Hungarian leader, "was one little word, and that word he refused to speak." Palmerston had also been asked to interfere to save Cracow. His answer was that line-of-battle ships could not reach Cracow. He afterwards explained that the little word Kossuth asked him to speak meant war, and nothing less. The Imperial masters of many legions care nothing for "little words," unless they can be followed by great acts.

The Pope, reformer as he professed to be, was

driven from his capital. The world saw with astonishment that France, while professedly a Republic, sent an army to put down another Republic in Rome. France under very different forms of government has generally seemed strangely inconsistent in its treatment of the Italian people, blowing hot and cold as circumstances might arise. This became still more evident under the Second Empire, and later, under the Third Republic.

While thrones were toppling from their bases the British people and their government were pursuing the even tenor of their way. For a time at least there was danger of revolution becoming supreme on the Continent; but the institutions of Great Britain were strengthened by the storm, which endangered thrones not based on the people's will, and surrounded by powerful armies. The Chartists had for years been holding a kind of National Convention under an Irishman, Feargus O'Connor, and other similar leaders. When revolutions became militant on the Continent, it was a matter of course that the Chartists should try their hands at making a great demonstration of a physical force character in London. It was announced that on the 10th of April, 1848, two hundred thousand men would assemble on Kennington Common, and proceed across the bridges to present a monster petition to the House of Commons.

They discovered, however, that to be forewarned was to be forearmed. A hundred and fifty thousand persons took the oath as special constables. Among them was Louis Napoleon, who, before the eventful year closed, was to be elected President of the French Republic. The Bank of England was fortified and occupied by soldiers. The bridges were held by the special constables, with large bodies of soldiers kept

in the background, ready to support the civilians had the state of affairs become serious. But the Chartists who met on Kennington Common, instead of amounting to two hundred thousand only numbered twenty thousand, and their chief, Feargus O'Connor, pathetically pleaded a bad cold and a blister on his breast. The monster petition was conveyed to Westminster in cabs; and the Chartists dispersed quietly to their homes without coming into serious collision with the police, the special constables, and the soldiers. Thus ended the attempt to get up a revolution in England, to keep the revolutionists of the Continent in countenance. The latter were most contemptuous of the Chartists who had shown no fight, and called them cowards. Such the Chartists may have appeared to be; they had appealed to physical force, and the middle classes in their own defence had accepted the challenge. As an active political organisation, depending on numbers and class prejudices, Chartism never recovered from the effects of this defeat. This was the lesson given to the revolutionists by the English people in the great year of revolutions. It was the last victory of the Duke of Wellington, who still occupied the position of Commander-in-Chief, acting on the principle not to make a parade of soldiers until the necessity came for their active employment. The victory of law and order in London was an extraordinary set off against the revolutions on the Continent. It was generally admitted to be an advance in political progress; while in the wild democratic outbursts abroad there was very little that was either progressive or stable.

Gibbon closes the thirty-eighth chapter of his History with an inquiry whether Europe, which he re-

gards as one vast commonwealth, is ever likely to be again overwhelmed by a deluge of barbarians. This question he decides in the negative. With great complacency he writes: "If a savage conqueror should issue from the deserts of Tartary, he must repeatedly vanquish the robust peasants of Russia, the numerous armies of Germany, the gallant nobles of France, and the intrepid freemen of Britain, who might confederate for their common defence. Should the victorious barbarians carry slavery and desolation as far as the Atlantic Ocean, ten thousand vessels would transport beyond the possibility of pursuit, the remains of civilized society; and Europe would revive and flourish in the American world, which is already filled with her colonies and institutions."

It does not appear to have occurred to the great historian of the Roman Empire, that anarchy might take root in the very midst of civilisation. Neither was such a thought entertained by the more philosophic historian, David Hume, who saw nothing in France but a gallant nation devoted to its sovereigns, contrasted with the turbulent English, who had, through the Puritan soldiery, cut off the head of a King. It was reserved for a writer, after the great outburst of the revolutionary element in 1848, to announce as a discovery that the barbarians were at the gates, and even in the streets of the proudest and most enlightened of cities, and could show their power when least expected.

In the November of 1848 the conclusion of the first two volumes of Macaulay's History of England was written. As I have already pointed out, Macaulay in one of his Essays censured Burke for not having thought better of the French Revolution, and assumed

that with the erection of the constitutional monarchy under Louis Philippe, the world had seen the last of French Revolutions. But Macaulay had found it necessary to modify his opinions. The pages of his History, written in 1848, contain his deliberate convictions, and were intended for posterity. "All around us," he says, "the world is convulsed by the agonies of great nations. Governments which seemed lately likely to stand during ages have been on a sudden shaken and overthrown. The proudest capitals of Western Europe have streamed with civil blood. All evil passions, the thirst of gain, and the thirst of vengeance, the antipathy of class to class, the antipathy of race to race, have broken loose from the control of divine and human laws. Fear and anxiety have clouded the faces and depressed the hearts of millions. Trade has been suspended and industry paralysed. The rich have become poor and the poor have become poorer. Doctrines hostile to all sciences, to all arts, to all industry, to all domestic charities, doctrines, which if carried into effect would undo all that thirty centuries have done for mankind, and would make the fairest provinces of France and Germany as savage as Congo or Patagonia, have been avowed from the tribune and defended by the sword. Europe has been threatened with subjugation by barbarians compared with whom the barbarians who marched under Attila and Alboin were enlightened and humane. The tried friends of the people have with the deepest sorrow owned that interests more precious than any political privileges were in jeopardy, and that it might be necessary to sacrifice even liberty to save civilisation."

These sentences, as contrasted with those by Gib-

bon just quoted, deserve to be given in full. They will well repay consideration. Where, at the time they were written, lay political progress according to Macaulay's mind? Where was the grand hope which led him to say that notwithstanding the crimes of the French Revolution, those who deplored them and denounced them ought to have looked forward? Where was the great superiority of Macaulay, a modern Whig, over Burke as an old Whig, in estimating the effect of great revolutions? The year 1848 passed away, without at least leaving a quarter of a century of revolutions and wars in its train.

There was, however, one dark spot in the British Isles. O'Connell died on his way to Rome in the May of 1847. His last days had been saddened by the formation of the Irish physical force party, as distinguished from that, of which he was the acknowledged chief, depending ostentatiously on moral force. At the time the Chartists were preparing for their great demonstration, which ended in such a failure, a deputation, with William Smith O'Brien, M. P. at its head, went to Paris virtually to ask assistance from the Provisional Republican Government against the Government of the United Kingdom. No such assistance, of course, could be given. On returning to the House of Commons Smith O'Brien was received with great indignation. He never again entered the House, and declared that the people could now judge whether the great assembly, afterwards called by Mr. Bright the Mother of Free Parliaments, was an assembly of gentlemen. In Ireland O'Brien attempted to get up a rebellion, which ended ludicrously for himself in a cabbage garden. It is not necessary to refer to the prosecutions, the trials,

and convictions of the more prominent members of what was called the Young Ireland Party. In how far Messrs. Smith O'Brien, Meagher, Mitchel, and Gavan Duffy, with others who might be named, can be considered to represent political progress, or whether they represented it at all, every reader can judge. It is a question of individual opinion. On this question we find ourselves treading on ashes under which the fire may still be burning. The Queen's University was established soon afterwards, to find its Colleges condemned as irreligious by the Synod of Thurles. A Roman Catholic University was started. The Queen visited Ireland, and held a Court in Dublin Castle. But the antagonistic elements among the population were manifested in a great riot at Dolly's Brae, and subsequently in other localities. In these events little that can be justly called political progress may be seen.

Austria continued to have her own difficulties both in her capital, and in Italy, where the revolution was progressing, while the Russians were putting down the Hungarians, and Radetzky had defeated the Sardinians at Navaro. Metternich had had to fly from Vienna, and after another insurrection in that capital the Emperor Ferdinand the First had to take refuge in Innsbruck. In December, the Emperor abdicated in favour of his nephew Francis Joseph, who afterwards revoked the constitution, and even abolished trial by jury. No sovereign ever succeeded to a more arduous inheritance. On his head all the misfortunes of the House of Atreus may be said to have accumulated; but he won, and in his old age has retained the respect of those who most blamed his earlier unconstitutional policy. Personally he appears as the one

connecting link of the separate members of the much divided Austrian Monarchy. The flight of the defeated Hungarian leaders into Turkey suddenly revived the whole Eastern question. Russia demanded the fugitive Poles: Austria, the Hungarians. Sir Stratford Canning, under the direction of Lord Palmerston, advised the Porte to refuse compliance with these demands, and the actual value of the Treaty of the 13th of July, 1841, was seen. The English fleet appeared in Besika Bay professedly to support Turkey against Russian and Austrian dictation. The difficulty was for a short time overcome. The Russian Bear had to draw in its claws: only to prepare a little later for a more resolute spring.

King Otho of Greece had persisted in disregarding the good advice given him by both Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston. Under Russian protection he had sought to free himself from his constitutional engagements. The laws were most arbitrarily administered, justice in any proper sense of the word being utterly disregarded. The Ionians, the Maltese, and others who had a right to British protection were treated worse than King Otho's recognised Greek subjects. A distinguished gentleman, Mr. Finlay, could get no payment for land the King had taken for his own private uses. A Gibraltar Jew, M. Pacifico, also a British subject, had his house broken into and his furniture destroyed by a mob, a very short distance from the guard house. The representations of the British Minister at Athens were treated almost with indifference, until in January, 1850, the British squadron made its appearance off the coast. Notwithstanding the appeal of the King to France and Russia as guaranteeing Powers, his Greek Majesty

was informed that none of his vessels would be allowed to leave the Piræus. A steamer which ventured out found itself taken possession of by one of the British ships of war. The French ambassador went to Athens to arrange this matter: but while a reasonable convention was being drawn up in London, the Greek Government had to surrender at discretion to the British fleet.

This was regarded as a very high handed proceeding. A strong Russian despatch was fulminated against Lord Palmerston, all of whose political opponents took advantage of the opportunity. For some time scarcely anything was heard of but Don Pacifico, of whom the British Foreign Minister was represented as the arrogant champion. Resolutions were carried in the House of Lords condemning Lord Palmerston's action towards Greece, whose weakness pleaded strongly in her defence. Immediately after the condemnatory resolutions were passed in the House of Lords, counter resolutions were called for in the House of Commons. I was in the gallery of the House when the Prime Minister was questioned with respect to the attitude the Government were prepared to take up in reply to the Lords. The scene is still vividly before my mind. Lord John Russell, amid great excitement, with his arms crossed upon his breast, replied with much dignity and resolution. In the course of a comparatively short speech he stated that the action of the majority of the Peers was unusual, and while it might cause embarrassment to the Government and to the House of Commons, to no institution might it be more injurious than to the House of Lords. This declaration was received with loud and significant cheers from the Ministerial benches. It sounded like a declaration of war.

Turning towards Lord Palmerston, who sat with folded arms, his hat drawn over his brow, Lord John Russell went on to say: "My noble friend is not the Minister of Austria, of Russia, or of any other Power: but the Minister of England. The honour of England, and the interests of England,—these are the objects to which he has been devoted, and to which he and the Government will continue to be devoted." I quote these remarkable words from memory. They made a great impression at the time: and became still more remarkable, and even perplexing, when read by the light of Lord John Russell's action with respect to Lord Palmerston so soon afterwards.

The debate, on the counter resolution proposed by Mr. Roebuck, continued four nights. It was one of the most important that ever took place in the House of Commons. It has, too, a pathetic interest, for it was in the course of it that Sir Robert Peel delivered his last speech. On the following afternoon he met with his fatal accident on Constitution Hill, and a few days afterwards died in great pain. His friend Mr. Gladstone, in the course of the debate, replied to the Foreign Minister in a very able and comprehensive speech. Lord Palmerston had quoted the words *Civis Romanus sum* as used in one of the great speeches of Cicero, and applied them to the position of Englishmen in foreign countries, where it was the duty of the British Minister to protect British subjects against injustice. Against this assumption Mr. Gladstone protested. It was remarked, however, that his attitude to Lord Palmerston was very different from that of his brother Peelite, Sir James Graham.

The debate and the division with a majority of

forty-six for the Government raised Lord Palmerston immensely in public opinion. He was now regarded as the most popular Minister of his time: people, indeed, compared him with the great Lord Chatham. Here political progress may be recognised. England had left the trammels of the Holy Alliance far behind, and stood forth in her own strength boldly facing the despotisms of the world. On the other hand the Minister was thought to be too high handed, and his reception of certain patriotic deputations, and the language they used respecting foreign Governments, called forth much criticism, especially from *The Times*, which had during the recent controversies taken a very unfavourable view of Lord Palmerston's conduct.

The public thought Lord Palmerston more securely established in his office than ever. He was undoubtedly more popular. But he had his own difficulties with his colleagues and with the Court. Shortly afterwards Lord John Russell wrote him a severe admonition from the Queen for having sent off some despatches without regarding her Majesty's suggestions, and for having sent others without even giving the Queen time to take them into consideration. This revelation, to those who had heard or read Lord John Russell's defence of his colleague as not "the Minister of Austria, of Russia, or of any other Power," came as a surprise. It seemed a startling contradiction, as *The Times*, though opposed to Lord Palmerston's foreign policy, delicately hinted.

In the December of 1851, Louis Napoleon, President of the French Republic, perpetrated his famous *coup d'état*. He became master of France: the Republic was destroyed. The public learned with sur-

prise soon afterwards that Lord Palmerston had been dismissed from office for having given entirely on his own responsibility an official sanction to the act of Louis Napoleon.

That Lord Palmerston had expressed to the French Ambassador an opinion that under the circumstances this step on the part of the Prince was justifiable, was admitted in the debate which followed in the House of Commons. But did this imply an official sanction, as Lord John Russell and his friends maintained? Palmerston himself scouted the idea. It was not, he said, usual for French Presidents or Sovereigns abroad to look for sanction of their proceedings to the Foreign Minister of England, nor to the British Government. On this question there were decided differences of opinion, which have never been reconciled. His veteran colleague Lord Lansdowne wrote to Lord Palmerston expressing regret at his dismissal; and so, strange to say, did Earl Grey, who had declined to take office with him in the December of 1845. Thus by a strange irony of fate we find Lord John Russell prevented from forming his Government to repeal the Corn Laws because at the Foreign Office Lord Palmerston was thought likely to be obnoxious to the French Sovereign and his Government, and now, six years afterwards Palmerston summarily dismissed from office for being considered too friendly to the ruler of France and his advisers.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CRIMEAN WAR: THE INDIAN MUTINY.

LORD PALMERSTON'S summary dismissal from office could not be expected to render Louis Napoleon, the author of the *coup d'état*, more friendly to Lord John Russell and his weakened Government. That the Ministry were seriously weakened was generally acknowledged. Mr. Roebuck, who had taken so decided a part in the vote of confidence in Lord Palmerston, asked indignantly, when Parliament met for the session of 1851: What there was in which the supporters of the Government and the Liberal party could feel confidence, when the Minister round whom all the political battles had been fought had been dismissed? Lord John Russell felt the taunt, and somewhat haughtily replied that Mr. Roebuck and those who thought with him had their remedy. The remedy was soon found. Owing to the feeling of distrust caused by the prospect of the President of the French Republic becoming Emperor, a Militia Bill was introduced, which Lord Palmerston severely criticised and held up to ridicule. The Bill was defeated by a majority of eleven, and the Ministry resigned. Lord Palmerston's motive in bringing about this defeat was well understood, and was not concealed by himself. Writing to his brother, on the 24th of February, he said: "I have had my tit for tat with John Russell, and I turned him out on Friday last." Lord John

Russell candidly admitted to his brother-in-law: "It's all fair. I dealt him a blow, and he has given me one in return." * This was not an issue in which political progress was involved. The Militia has continued to be a more or less difficult question to different administrations. It still remains a difficulty, shadowing for conscription at the close of the nineteenth century, nearly half a century after Lord John Russell's defeat.

Lord Derby's first administration succeeded Lord John Russell's and passed a Militia Act. But the Ministry fell after some twelve months in office, on Mr. Disraeli's budget. Mr. Gladstone in a great speech assailed his rival with much power, dissected his various provisions, and concluded by appealing to Conservative finance. The Coalition Government with Lord Aberdeen at its head was formed. Mr. Disraeli, in the hour of his defeat, had said that "England did not love Coalitions." The new Coalition Ministry from the first may be said to have had a strong centrifugal tendency: the ministers were certainly not much in love with one another. With the Emperor of France apparently in a position of isolation, the Russian Emperor thought that he saw his opportunity. The Tzar wrote of Turkey as "a sick man dying," and planned a partition of the Sultan's possessions, keeping for himself, the lion's share. Ostensibly the dispute between Russia and Turkey concerned the guardianship of the Holy Places, especially the Holy Sepulchre, in Jerusalem. Of these both Russia and France claimed to be the protectors. But the real cause of the dispute with Turkey lay much deeper. The Emperor Nicholas was deeply

* See *Lord John Russell* by Stuart Reid, p. 195.

interested in the protection of the Christian populations suffering from Turkish misrule; he was ambitious to extend his power to the Dardanelles, and to open a way for Russian commerce to the Mediterranean. Louis Napoleon, who, a year after he had made himself Prince President of the French Republic, became, by another plebiscite, Emperor, was desirous of war. By it he saw an opportunity of gaining in Europe a position that had been hitherto contemptuously denied him, and of becoming an ally of the British Government. The Russian army on July 2nd, 1853, crossed the Pruth, and occupied the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Lord Aberdeen was essentially a minister of peace. He was warmly supported by Mr. Gladstone, who a few months before had addressed to him his two letters on the misgovernment of the King of Naples. Mr. Gladstone was not merely a political but a warm personal friend of the Prime Minister, and was justly considered devoted to the cause of peace. Relying on these pacific inclinations the Emperor of Russia went too far. He could not, he thought, without humiliation withdraw his troops from the Principalities, nor his absolute pretensions to be the protector of the Greek Christians. The English and French fleets appeared in the Dardanelles. Negotiations were carried on, and a great deal was said about a Vienna Note, which seemed to complicate matters. Lord Clarendon had to admit that his country was drifting towards war. The Prime Minister desired to be left to his hopes and prayers for peace: not a commanding attitude on the part of a statesman at the head of a great government. A deputation from the Peace Society went to St. Petersburg to interview the Em-

peror, and returned with the gratifying intelligence that he had very mild eyes.

But these mild eyes profited nothing in the cause of peace. The Russian fleet, almost in presence of the British, destroyed the Turkish at Sinope, where the cynic Diogenes after his very just banishment condemned his enemies to live. Here may be noted the great change in British public opinion with respect to Russia. When the Turkish fleet was destroyed at Navarino, nearly a quarter of a century before, the British Liberals rejoiced. It was supposed to be a step in political progress. Liberals had sympathised with Greece against Turkey, and did not approve of the statement in the King's Speech, in opening the session of 1829, to the effect that the destruction of the Turkish fleet was "an untoward event." Both Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston expressed their surprise that any sympathy should be shown with such a Power as Turkey.

But when, nearly a quarter of a century afterwards, Russia destroyed another Turkish fleet, the indignation of both Liberals and Conservatives was general. Russia was looked upon as the encroaching despotism, bent on carrying out the policy of Peter the Great, taking possession of Constantinople, and giving the law to all Europe. Had not Napoleon when in exile prophesied that Europe would become Cossack? Was that prophecy now about to be fulfilled? The Tzar insisted on his protectorate over the Holy Places and over the Greek Christians in Turkey, and showed no intention of withdrawing his troops beyond the Pruth. The Emperor of the French, who had already shown great activity in many parts of the world, insisted on the protectorate of France over the Holy Places.

Thus, as Lord John Russell finely deprecated, the tomb of Christ became a cause, or we may rather say a pretence of quarrel between Christians.

To enter into details with respect to the various negotiations preceding the Crimean War, and into the events of that war itself, would be beyond the province of this volume. There can be no doubt that the Prime Minister, Lord Aberdeen, before the war began showed great weakness, and relied too much on his friendship with the Emperor Nicholas. The Emperor himself relied too much on an agreement come to when he was on a visit to the Queen in 1844,—an agreement which was far from having the comprehensive character he maintained at this time, even appealing personally to Her Majesty. The Coalition Ministry was essentially weak. It is not indeed true, as Mr. Disraeli had asserted, that England does not love coalitions. There had been coalitions very powerful and popular; one to carry on the war with France in the time of Queen Anne; and another, between the first William Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle, to carry on the Seven Years' War at the close of George the Second's reign. But the Coalition under Lord Aberdeen was neither successful in peace, nor, afterwards, in war. Lord Stratford Canning's return to Constantinople embittered the Emperor Nicholas, who had refused to receive him as ambassador in the early time of Earl Grey's Reform Administration. It can scarcely be said that the influence of Canning was pacific. The young Sultan was encouraged to resist, and at last to declare war.

The war can scarcely be considered to have been carried on with a definite policy. It was tentative.

The Prime Minister disliked the war. The Duke of Newcastle, who curiously enough at its beginning, was both Colonial Secretary and Secretary of War, had no official experience as an administrator of war. From the beginning, and until Lord Palmerston took the first position in the Cabinet, there was a great deal that was half-hearted. Lord John Russell's sudden retirement in the face of Mr. Roebuck's resolution condemning the conduct of the war, placed the Ministers, as Lord Palmerston said, in a position in which they ought not to have been placed by a colleague. This Lord John Russell himself afterwards admitted. Mr. Roebuck's resolution was carried by a large majority. Lord Aberdeen retired. His Peelite colleagues soon afterwards followed, and what was practically a new government was formed under Lord Palmerston, who was the master of the situation. The stars in their courses had fought in his favour. Mr. Gladstone virtually went into opposition, and soon thought it becoming to proclaim his belief in "the paramount destiny of Russia."

No person can look back at that time, either from a military or political point of view, with any satisfaction. Some gallant deeds were done by British soldiers in the Crimea. But the commissariat, even with the great naval Power commanding the sea, was sadly deficient. Though Balaclava and Inkerman are still household names, they awaken painful recollections. The day on which the Guards on returning from the war entered London was considered a great day, and they were received with wild enthusiasm, but those who saw the look on the countenances of those brave soldiers will never forget the impression produced. It was that of men who for many months

had felt themselves under the shadow of impending death. They knew it: they felt it: they could not hide it.

The war added between forty and fifty millions to the British National Debt, and cost twenty-five thousands of British lives. Much the larger number of the soldiers died, not on the battlefield, but from the hardships to which they had been exposed. For many years England may be said to have been suffering from the evils of a long peace. Even under the Duke of Wellington as a kind of permanent Commander-in-Chief the military organization had been much neglected: the money spent on the army continued to be grudged by professed reformers and Liberals. Public men like Cobden and Bright, after their victory over the Corn Laws, had naturally great democratic influence, especially in the large towns, which Cobden declared would govern the country. Lord Palmerston in 1851 had called the first of the Great Exhibitions, the "Temple of Peace." Peace indeed was alone thought of, until the nation found itself without preparation not only drifting into, but suddenly involved in war.

The people, however, beyond a small circle, including the members of the Peace Society, even during the misfortunes in the Crimea, were convinced that they were pursuing the right policy. They undoubtedly considered that the policy represented progress and not reaction. Lord John Russell, before his sudden retirement from Lord Aberdeen's Ministry, had induced the Earl and his colleagues to allow him to bring in another Reform Bill, which as the horizon became blood-red he had to withdraw. But he had shown that the nickname of "Finality John" was mis-

applied. Lord Palmerston, as his letters prove, was much opposed to Lord John's proposals, which had they been introduced when circumstances allowed them to be fairly and deliberately considered, would have been found to embody reasonable and moderate reforms.

It has been said with some truth that though the British Government and people have often been slow to enter on war, when they are ~~once~~ in it they are slow to make peace. This was not the case with France. The Emperor became anxious to come to terms with Russia. England might only be getting her hand into the contest, but her principal ally wished to withdraw his. The treaty of Peace was signed at Paris on the 30th of March, 1856. Russia had to give up her control of the Danube, her pretensions to a protectorate of the Principalities, and her military and naval authority in the Black Sea, which was neutralised,—a neutralisation which was repudiated by Russia with the consent of Prince Bismarck and Germany on the defeat of France in the great war of nearly thirty years ago. The most important point was the confirmation of the privileges granted to the Turkish Christians, with an undertaking on the part of the Sultan to protect them from misgovernment, and to give them equality with his Mussulman subjects. This was considered a set off to the claim of Russia, which could not be maintained in the face of defeat, to be the defender of the Greek Christians.

It was considered that a great point had been gained. Was this so? Did the results of the war represent political progress in the middle of the nineteenth century? On this subject there have been, and still are differences of opinion. A large number

of people, and those among the most enlightened and intelligent, have in recent years declared that the Crimean War was a great mistake, that it marked a step backward and not forward. Burke's words on the Turkish Empire, which are still quoted with approbation, have already been referred to; but they deserve to be given in full. "I have never before heard it held forth", Burke wrote, "that the Turkish Empire has ever been considered any part of the balance of power in Europe. They despise and condemn all Christian princes as infidels, and only wish to subdue them and their people. What have these worse than savages to do with the Powers of Europe but to spread war, destruction, and pestilence, amongst them? The ministers and the policy which shall give these people any weight in Europe will deserve all the bans and curses of posterity." To those words, written by Burke in the last part of his political career, many people in all parts of the world will even now cry Amen!

But those who were most interested in the Crimean War cannot even now admit that it was a mistake. Many years afterwards Mr. Gladstone, who in his latest years became bitterly opposed to the Sultan, said that in its groundwork the Crimean War was the vindication of European law against unprovoked Russian aggression. This assumed that the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire ought to be defended against Russia. Russia was undoubtedly checked in her advance on Turkey. The war proved to Russia that she would not be allowed to carry out her aggressive designs without European resistance, that the other Powers would have a great deal to say

before she could establish herself at Constantinople and command the Dardanelles.

This was undoubtedly a great gain, which could not have been obtained in any other manner. In later years, when Russia resumed her career of aggression on Turkey, it was shown that whatever might be the evils of the Sultan's misgovernment, the Turks as a fighting power had still to be reckoned with, and that from a military point of view they could not be regarded as effete.

The British statesmen who promoted the Crimean War, and made the Treaty of Peace at Paris in March, 1856, have passed away. Not one of them still survives. In justice to their memory it must be said that they believed in the sincerity of the pledges given by the Porte, who by the Hatti Sherif promulgated in 1853 guaranteed the rights of the Greek Christians, and by the Firman of February, 1856, promised civil equality and religious liberty to all Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The Firman professed to abolish "every distinction making any subjects of the Empire inferior to any other class on account of their religion, language, and race." The solemn pledges contained in those proclamations were regarded as part of the Treaty of Peace. British statesmen did not think that, instead of endeavouring to improve the condition of the Christian populations under her care, Turkey would cynically disregard the undertakings into which she had entered, and violate both in spirit and in letter her solemn assurances. It was only by slow degrees that British statesmen and the British people learned to estimate Turkish promises at their proper worth.

At the time of the Crimean War Great Britain was regarded as the special champion of Turkey. The conduct of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who for many years had been our Ambassador at Constantinople, lent colour to the impression. But in 1858 he returned to England and was succeeded by Sir H. Lytton Bulwer. The pledges given by the Porte rendered the position of the Christians in many districts rather worse than better. Stories of ill-treatment, and of massacres disturbed the public mind. In 1860 Lord Dufferin was sent as British Commissioner into the Lebanon, to enquire into the treatment of the Christians. He was said to have given their oppressor a lesson by running into a creek with his yacht, landing, and summarily hanging a Pasha caught in the act of murder. I have reason to believe on the best authority that this alleged incident did not occur in the manner stated. But the report, which was widely circulated, produced a great impression at the time, and probably had a good effect.

A year after the signature of the Treaty of Peace putting an end to the Crimean War, the British public, as well as the Indian officials, were startled by what is called the Indian Mutiny. But in reality the mutiny was confined to the native, or Sepoy regiments in Bengal. This occurred just a century after the British Empire in India had been established by the victory of Clive at Plassey. It is believed that greased cartridges, which the natives thought were introduced to destroy their caste, were the immediate cause of the mutiny. The retreat and massacre in Afghanistan a quarter of a century before had probably weakened British prestige, and the annexation of Oudh, in 1856, may have contributed to a union of

Mohammedans and Hindoos. But the main cause of the rising was the want of organisation of the British military forces in India, and too great a reliance on native troops. These were as six to one of the British; they had the command of most of the strong places, and a large portion of the artillery. The massacres that followed were of an appalling character: and for a time, at least, the British power in India was in danger of being utterly swept away.

The Emperor of the French was good enough to offer the assistance of troops to put down the Mutiny. But Lord Palmerston, with the precedent of the effect of Russian assistance to Austria in defeating the Hungarian rebellion before his mind, firmly declined the proposal. "I am strongly of opinion," he wrote, "that we ought to win this innings against the Sepoys off our own bat."

Lord Canning, upon whom devolved the task of suppressing the Mutiny, was accused at the time of weakness, and was called "Clemency" Canning. But this is a reproach which no longer exists. It is now regarded as his especial honour that when the passions were so furiously excited he made a noble stand to save the innocent blood. Driven to bay, and for a time in danger of being overwhelmed, the British soon reasserted their supremacy. In no conflict has the superiority of race over race been more signally displayed. It is not necessary to dwell upon that heroic story. Few people would express the opinion that political progress was not concerned in the triumph of the British arms over the Indian mutineers, or that the cause of humanity, civilisation, and peace, would have been advanced by leaving the two great Asiatic races in India to fight it out between

themselves. The native races, however, would not have been left to themselves, even if we had withdrawn from India. Other actors would have appeared upon the scene. Russia, who may be said to be almost at Herat, the gate of India, has been steadily feeling her way, since the Crimean War, through Central Asia. She has sought to make the ruler of Afghanistan a creature of her own, and, in the event of another war with Great Britain, is credited with wishing to appear with her armed battalions on the banks of the Indus.

The great nations of the European continent have no intention of remaining within their ancient limits. Some of them are dreaming of world-wide Empires, which exist for the most part in Imperial imaginations. In the race for Empire Great Britain has outstripped them all: though France has not forgotten that she was once in a fair way of anticipating England in forming an Indian Empire, of which the unfortunate Dupleix was the first to recognise the practicability.

A great change in the organisation of British power in India was recognised as inevitable after the Mutiny. At each renewal of the East India Company's Charter changes had been made: but it gradually became evident that the great corporation had outgrown itself, and was no longer the beneficial anomaly it had formerly been pronounced.

In the days of Clive and Warren Hastings many arbitrary and oppressive acts had been committed by the rulers of India. The House of Commons had formally condemned some of Clive's proceedings, while acknowledging that he had rendered great public services. It is impossible to defend the treat-

ment of the Rohillas and of the Begums of Oudh by Warren Hastings, or other misdeeds that stained his arduous administration. His apologists, however, maintained that Hastings had also rendered great public services, and this scarcely any one would now deny. But at a time when great principles of political morality and political progress were not so generally recognised as they now are, committees of the House of Commons, after elaborate and careful enquiry, condemned in the strongest manner the unscrupulous measures which the first of the Governors-General of India had on several occasions adopted. It is well to remember that the impeachment of Hastings was sanctioned by a House of Commons led by Dundas and Pitt, and in which the Whigs had been in a hopeless minority since the defeat of the Coalition Ministry.

That the eminent men who understood the heavy task of impeaching Hastings were influenced by the noblest motives, few will now care to dispute. Those who view the question from an independent standpoint believe that the famous trial, which lasted over seven years, produced great public benefits, and marks a new epoch in political progress, in the best sense of the words. This, if I am not mistaken, is the opinion of recent Viceroy.

The great trial, if it did nothing else, established a high standard of political morality for the guidance of our rulers in the East. None of Hastings' successors have rendered themselves liable to the charges brought against the first Governor-General of India. Though the accusers of Hastings retired nominally defeated from Westminster Hall, many people consider, that, so far as their public objects were con-

cerned, their victory was complete. Their objects were to promote the good government of India, to protect many millions of people who were unable to protect themselves, to throw over them the Parliamentary ægis, to give them as far as practicable the benefit of the British Constitution, to show, as the greatest of the managers engaged in the impeachment said, that under the British Constitution there could be no such thing as geographical morality, that a crime committed in India under delegated British authority was of the same dye, and liable to the same punishment as a similar crime committed in Great Britain.

Has not this great principle ever since been asserted and respected? Is it not now acted upon in India, and throughout the whole British Empire? We have only to look at the proceedings of the immediate successors of Hastings to recognise what a change had taken place in the administration of India. Sir John Shore, Lord Wellesley, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Minto, Lord Moira, the Marquis of Hastings, Lord Amherst, Lord William Bentinck, are justly regarded as wise and beneficent rulers of India. The same may be said of their successors. Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning practically sacrificed their lives for the good of the people whom they had been sent out to govern. When Lord Dalhousie, in the last year of his Governor-Generalship, ordered General Outram to undertake the administration of Oudh, the reason given was that the British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man, if it any longer sustained by its countenance a government "fraught with the sufferings of millions."

When the Charter of the East India Company

was renewed in 1853, it was not, as it had been ever since the Regulating Act of Lord North, for a fixed term of years, but for an indefinite period which might at any time be terminated by Parliament. During the discussion Mr. Disraeli spoke of a time when there might be a formal renewal of the Company's Charter. "Some of us now present," he said, "may be here when this question is again fully considered. Perhaps I may be one." None of the members then thought that the abolition of the Charter was so near. After the Mutiny the Charter stood condemned. Its abolition was only a question of time; and the change was one that has not been regretted. For many years the great corporation had ceased to be a trading company, and its position under the control of the Government had become an anomaly.

The East India Company had developed grave defects which were irreconcilable with the spirit and progress of the age. From the time of Hastings the tendency had been to foster a bureaucratic spirit antagonistic to the British people, and hostile to the free working of British institutions. The officials of the Company, isolated by time and distance from England, grew to look upon themselves as holding independent positions. They formed a separate governing caste, by whom public opinion was regarded with contempt. They had their own ideas, their own ways, and the longer they continued in India the more inveterate became their prejudices. This school of administration, which Hastings formed, and of which he was the especial representative, continued long after he had left India, and was living an octogenarian at Daylesford the seat of his ancestors. By Indian officials Hastings was, of course, regarded as a much

injured man, and the managers of his impeachment, especially Burke, cruel oppressors more than half mad.

Macaulay's judgment upon these questions is essentially sane. His writings, with all their rhetorical brilliancy and study of effect, have as their basis something of the commonplace. He seldom attempted to rise beyond a certain level to higher things. But his six years' knowledge and experience of India render his judgment upon Indian questions of great value. The conclusions expressed in the essay on Warren Hastings are very much those of Burke himself, and they have been quite as much condemned by those who have breathed the Indian official atmosphere. It is also significant that when Macaulay was drawing up the Indian Penal Code, he was regarded by the ordinary Indian placemen with great dislike and distrust.* He was supposed to look on Indian affairs from an independent point of view, and this was regarded as an unpardonable sin.

The Queen became sovereign of India. It was not, however, until some eighteen years later that Her Majesty was proclaimed Empress of India. On the assumption of that title very decided differences of opinion were expressed in Parliament and by the public press. The Queen was regarded as the most august representative of hereditary monarchy in the world. One opponent of the proposal said: "I would rather be the oldest Queen than the youngest Empress." Pledges were given by the Conservative Ministry that the use of the title of Empress was to be strictly confined to India, that it was not to be

*See *Life of Macaulay* by Sir George Trevelyan.

used in the United Kingdom nor in the British colonies.

In India itself the Imperial title had a beneficial effect on the natives. The East India Company ruling as a trading corporation was quite beyond the understanding of both Mussulmans and Hindoos. It was to them a mysterious Power coming from beyond the sea. But they could realise the existence of their "Good Mother," so far away, even though she were never likely to be seen by them. Her Majesty by being proclaimed Empress of India, was not, as was superciliously suggested by some advisers of the policy, placed on a level with Continental Emperors. As ruler on the principles of British constitutional freedom over our growing colonies and over so many millions of Indians, the Queen occupies a much higher and prouder position.

Though in India, Imperialism was fostered by the title of Empress, British constitutional freedom began to have an influence on the higher classes of the natives. The writings of three great British authors became widely known, and awoke a world of new ideas and aspirations. These authors are Shakespeare, Milton, and Burke, whom Indians place in the same high category.* It has been said that it is the sword which governs and must govern India. In more recent years efforts have been made, especially by Lord Ripon, to combine with the sword something which at least has a semblance of representative government. That the experiment has been successful can perhaps

*Of this I was informed by a very distinguished Indian official very soon after his return from the East. He is now a member of the House of Commons. See Lord Dufferin's *Speeches*.

scarcely be said. Lord Dufferin on succeeding Lord Ripon inherited difficulties which other Viceroy's had not had to encounter: but so far from blaming his predecessor he paid a graceful and eloquent tribute to his merits. It is a noteworthy coincidence that one of the first things with which Lord Dufferin had to deal, was an Indian land problem not very dissimilar to that to which he had long given so much thought in Ireland.

The British Empire in India is greatly envied. There have been recent difficulties with the tribes on the North Western frontiers. But it may be said that British rule in India is more secure, and that our administration is better than ever before. The native Princes are more attached to British rule than they ever were. They are quite well aware that they have nothing to gain, but much to lose by exchanging the rule of the Empress of India for an Imperial Master coming from the far North. This is the actual situation as the nineteenth century closes and the new century begins. It may seem as hopeless to speak of political progress in India as in China. But as the years roll on, it will be found that the great civilised communities of the West will exert a powerful influence for good over the Eastern masses under their control, and will succeed in carrying out those principles of justice and liberty, which are the foundations of human progress.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNITED STATES: IRELAND.

Nor long after the East India Company was abolished the North American Republic was distracted by a momentous civil war. A short time before, the American Commodore Tatnall had assisted the English in an engagement with the Chinese on the river Pei-Ho, remarking significantly that "Blood is thicker than water." This expression of sympathy was much commented upon at the time: it struck a chord of feeling which had seemed latent ever since the War of Independence, but is so no longer. The steady development of good feeling between Great Britain and the United States may be regarded as one of the best signs of political progress. The English Slave Trade is stated to have been begun by Sir John Hawkins, who in 1562 procured negroes on the coast of Africa and took them for sale to the West Indies. Fourteen years before the eighteenth century ended, a hundred and thirty British ships were stated to have conveyed not fewer than forty-two thousand negroes away from the country of their birth for sale as slaves. At the time of the Declaration of Independence slavery existed in the American Colonies. Notwithstanding the statement in the celebrated Massachusetts Bill of Rights, and the decision of the Supreme Court at Boston on the declaration that "All men are born free and equal," slavery continued to exist in the

Southern States. The question merged itself into one of State Rights. On the details of the American Civil War it is not necessary to enter. The struggle between the Northern and Southern States was regarded by many people as one between Freedom and Slavery. Looked at in this light it had of course the sympathies of those who felt strongly on this question as one of morality and religion. To this feeling among the English speaking races the appearance of Mrs. Beecher Stowe's celebrated book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," powerfully contributed. To the unjust taunt of some English critics that she was a land of slavery, America might very properly have retorted that the British themselves had been the greatest slave traders, that they had begun the immoral traffic, and bequeathed it to their descendants in the New World. The great extension of the cotton manufacture in the South had, of course, done much to render slavery there a domestic institution.

Looked at in the abstract, however, it did seem strange that States voluntarily united together by the equal and common bond of Republican brotherhood, should be held in the Union by force of arms. In this proceeding, as could scarcely be denied, there appeared something very illogical. But political questions are seldom decided by logic. They deal with the interests and the passions of mankind.

The war extended over an enormous area. From a military point of view it was not especially interesting: the soldiers and the generals had to be formed, or, it may be said, extemporised.

The North affected great indignation when the British Government issued a proclamation of neutrality. This was represented as a recognition of the

South as a belligerent Power. It is not easy to see how any other course could have been taken by British Ministers. The Southern States could scarcely be called rebellious subjects of a ruling Power. North and South stood on the common ground of a Republic, in which the various States were supposed to have independent and equal rights.

The British people, and the British colonists, took the greatest interest in this gigantic civil war of the Anglo-Saxon race on the North American continent. Large numbers of people espoused the cause of the South, as fighting for their own rights, whatever might become of the slaves.

The most remarkable opinion expressed on the subject was, during the second year of the war, uttered by Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. Those who are only familiar with the last years of his life would naturally suppose that all Mr. Gladstone's sympathies would have been with the Northern States, and the freedom of the slaves. But his father, Sir John Gladstone, had owned a plantation in Demerara, and his son, in his maiden speech in the House of Commons, had strongly maintained that Parliament had established slavery, and that if it were abolished its owners were entitled to compensation from Parliament. This was Mr. Gladstone's attitude, in the first session of the Reformed Parliament, on June 3rd, 1833. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 7th of October, 1862, speaking at Newcastle, he said: "We may have our own opinions about slavery, we may be for or against the South, but there is no doubt I think about this: Jefferson Davis and the other leaders of the South have made an army: they are making, it appears, a navy: and they have made,

gentlemen, what is more than either, they have made a nation." The separation of the North and South he declared to be as certain as any event future or contingent could be. This statement, so confidently made, was an unfortunate one. Foresight, or what Lord Beaconsfield loved to call prescience, could not be justly attributed to Mr. Gladstone. He had many rare gifts: but that was certainly not one of them. Five years afterwards, he had to acknowledge that on the result of the American civil war he had been very much mistaken. "I must confess," he said, "that I was wrong: that I took too much upon myself in expressing such an opinion. Yet the motive was not bad."

The North triumphed over the South, slavery was abolished, and peace restored in the great Republic. Had it been otherwise, many people will doubt whether the results would have been as favourable to political progress as what actually ensued. The question is one on which differences of opinion are still entertained. But there can be none respecting the rapidity with which the country recovered from the effects of the tremendous civil war.

During the course of the war some important questions respecting neutrality arose between the United Kingdom and the Northern States. Under the circumstances they were almost inevitable. The escape of the "Alabama" from the Mersey the day before the British Government had ordered her detention, was not a creditable proceeding, and the depredations she committed on Northern shipping continued to be a subject of contention between the governments of the United States and of the United Kingdom long after the American civil war had ended. For the

actual damages done by the "Alabama," and her two sister vessels the "Florida" and "Shenandoah" the amount claimed was more than three millions and a quarter; while the amount claimed for all damages direct and indirect was nine millions and nearly a half.

After many futile negotiations between the two governments, a treaty was signed at Washington, on May 8th, 1871. By the treaty a Board of Arbitration was established to settle the differences between the United States and Great Britain. The tribunal of arbitration, which sat at Geneva, held that the indirect claims, which must be stigmatised as unjust and ridiculous, did not constitute a valid ground for compensation. But it was unanimously decided that Great Britain was liable for the acts committed by the "Alabama," "having failed by omission to fulfil" the duties prescribed by the Washington Treaty, which affirmed the principle of "responsibility for depredations where the government had not exercised the utmost diligence and caution to prevent the fitting-out of privateers." With regard to the "Florida," all the arbitrators, except Sir Alexander Cockburn, found against Great Britain; and three out of the five, held that she was also liable for the acts of the "Shenandoah." The damages awarded to the United States amounted to £3,229,166.

The award of the tribunal of arbitration, which was made in September, 1872, gave rise to much discussion. The decision was based on the admission of a new *ex post facto* principle of International Law, which many regarded with disapproval. But it was argued with more reason, that the principle established was of paramount importance to Great Britain

as the most powerful of maritime States, possessing the largest amount of property upon the seas. The security obtained for British shipping in the future was thought to be worth even the very large sum ordered to be paid under the award, which was certainly a liberal one. When all the substantiated claims were satisfied there remained a large surplus, which it was contended really belonged to the British tax-payers. But the satisfactory settlement of the differences between the United States and Great Britain was well worth the cost, and though the people whose pockets were injuriously affected may have been of another opinion at the time, there is no doubt that to-day the establishment of the great principle of arbitration between the two countries, is considered by the majority of the British nation as distinctly an advance in political progress.

The indirect effects of the American civil war on Great Britain and Ireland were serious, and prolonged. They can scarcely be said to have even yet passed away. A number of American Irish took part on both sides. Of those who enrolled themselves in the army of the North, some had taken part in the Young Ireland movement in their native country, and had been tried, convicted, and punished for treasonable conduct. This, of course, did not render them more attached to the United Kingdom. Professedly devoted to the cause of separation at home, they saw no inconsistency in taking up arms in America for the cause of the Union as represented by the North, against the cause of Disunion as represented by the South. It has been said of Irishmen, justly or unjustly, that they always fight better abroad than at home, for the cause of others than for their own.

However that may be, when the civil war was over the Irish Americans found their military occupation gone. To it they had become more or less habituated, and pined for action. They turned their attention both to Canada and Ireland. The Fenian raids on Canada were easily repelled, and were little better than ludicrous failures. Times were greatly changed since the Papineau rebellion some thirty years previously. The mass of the Canadians had become thoroughly loyal. Thirty-three thousand men were under arms, and the Fenians on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act were only too glad to have the opportunity of saving themselves by retreating across the frontier.

In Ireland the Fenian organisation was believed to be very extensive. It was composed for the most part of the humbler and more ignorant classes south of the Boyne. At the close of the civil war the American Fenians announced that officers were going to Ireland to organise an army of two hundred thousand men. This was more easily said than done. The Fenian army, about which so much was said, never made its appearance in Ireland. A Fenian provisional government was, indeed, established in New York: but a Fenian government, like a Fenian army, was one thing in New York, and a very different thing in Dublin or Cork. It is remarkable that a number of Fenians went over from Glasgow to Ireland to organise an insurrection in Belfast. This I learned from a Catholic resident magistrate, and from a well-known editor of an Irish National journal published in that progressive town. One night when an outbreak was anticipated, the resident magistrate came to *The Northern Whig* office, and said to me as

the Editor: "You are quite unprotected here. Shall we send you up a force?" My reply was: "Protected, or unprotected, we do not want a force. It shall not be said that we are afraid." But even in Belfast there was great tension on the official nerves. The police looked upon every stranger as a Fenian. When such was the feeling in Belfast, where any attempted outbreak could have been easily put down, and where the Fenians would have been hopelessly outnumbered, it is easy to imagine what was the state of the rest of the country.

The resident magistrate above mentioned, was Mr. O'Donnell, who owing to his efficiency had been sent to Belfast after the first serious riots. He owned a small estate near Kilmallock, where he often stated everything was perfectly safe. As a fact, however, a number of Fenians attacked the police barracks there, but were driven off with loss by some fourteen of the constabulary. This at least was serious fighting. On the 6th of March, 1867, a proclamation of an Irish Republic was sent for publication in English and Irish newspapers. The very next day there was a rising at Tallaght, near Dublin: but the police repelled the attack without the least difficulty, and the Fenians, composed of the lowest classes in Dublin, ran vigorously homeward anxious to shield themselves in the slums of the capital. At Drogheda a thousand armed men sought to take possession of the market place: but the appearance of the police was enough. It is difficult to account for such conduct, which it must be admitted was the reverse of heroic.

To enter into further details of the Fenian disturbances is unnecessary. The promise of the escaped Fenian leader, James Stephens, that before the

end of a year he would have thousands of Fenians fighting in Ireland against British troops was never redeemed. There was much apparent activity in America: but in Ireland the movement gradually settled down. In England there was a show of determination. Two Fenians on their way to prison were rescued, and a sergeant shot in the police van. For that crime three men, Allen, Gould, and Larkin, were hanged at Salford, and were called the "Manchester martyrs." The Clerkenwell explosion, which followed soon after the murder of Sergeant Brett, was the most serious of all the crimes committed in the name of the Fenians. The prison wall was blown down: and the loss of life and injury inflicted on a large number of innocent people, were appalling. Six persons were killed outright by the explosion: many others directly or indirectly died from the effects: a hundred and twenty persons were wounded, fifteen being permanently injured: forty mothers were prematurely confined, twenty of their infants died, and others were afflicted for life.

This explosion had important political consequences, not obvious to many ordinary people. According to Mr. Gladstone it induced him to reconsider his Irish policy, and to undertake the disestablishment of the Irish State Church, which he had declared some years before to be outside the range of practical politics. Several years before the great crime at Clerkenwell was committed, Mr. Gladstone had begun to turn his attention to Ireland as especially worthy of his reforming energies. The question of the disestablishment of the Irish Church, which had slept a long sleep from the days of the well-known Appropriation Clause, had been unexpectedly raised

in the House of Commons during the absence of the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone who had been so earnest a defender of Church and State, seized the opportunity to deliver an emphatic speech, in which the policy of disestablishment in Ireland was unequivocally foreshadowed. The speech delighted the Irish Liberal or Catholic members. "Now," said Mr. Maguire, "we have a leader." Yes! A leader had been obtained for an Irish policy which was to carry Mr. Gladstone very far indeed along the path which he convinced himself, and the great majority of professed Liberal representatives, was the most direct way of political progress, leading as they felt convinced to the peace and unity of the Empire. How far indeed the blowing down of prison walls and the murder of many innocent people could justly be said to promote the disestablishment of the State Church in Ireland, or any other political reform, is a question which readers must decide for themselves. Mr. Gladstone, in a speech delivered at Dalkeith in November of 1879, said: "When it came to this, that a great jail in the heart of the metropolis was broken open under circumstances which drew the attention of the English people to the state of Ireland, and when in Manchester policemen were murdered in the execution of their duty, almost the whole country became alive to Irish questions, and the questions of the Irish Church revived. It came within the range of practical politics." If we are to accept so high an authority, political progress is advanced by the most unlikely methods.

CHAPTER X.

FRANCE AND GERMANY.

ON the death of Lord Palmerston Mr. Gladstone became leader of the House of Commons. He appeared in this position when Parliament met early in the year 1866. Lord John Russell, now Earl Russell, was Prime Minister, but Mr. Gladstone at once appeared to be the moving spirit of the administration. Lord Palmerston had not been a reformer. His Government had been moderate and conciliatory to all classes. But the thorough going Liberals had become impatient at what they represented to be a policy of standing still, and Mr. Gladstone and Earl Russell were inclined to show that they were animated by a more politically progressive spirit.

The question of Reform was revived. At the beginning of the year the controversy on this policy was carried on with much energy: but one great fact was overlooked by Mr. Gladstone, who was perhaps not indisposed to place his nominal chief Earl Russell at a disadvantage. The new House of Commons had not been chosen on the Reform question, which at the dissolution was not before the constituencies. The Government majority in the House was a Palmerstonian majority, elected to support the old and still popular leader. To attempt to pass a Reform Bill during the first session of a new parliament is always a hazardous proceeding, even under more

favourable circumstances than existed in 1866. Members who had had to pay somewhat dearly for their seats, felt no desire to support a measure which might send them back to the constituencies almost before they had become familiar with their duties. In the course of the discussion on the Ministerial Bill Mr. Bright alluded to these circumstances in somewhat reproachful terms. He reminded members that the elections had cost an enormous sum of money,—a consideration that undoubtedly caused even professed Liberals to view the Bill in a lukewarm if not a hostile spirit. Another objection to the Bill was that while it extended the franchise, it did not deal with the equally important question of a redistribution of seats. A Redistribution Bill had afterwards to be incorporated with it: but this did not disarm the malcontents on both sides of the House of Commons.

The most energetic opponent of the Bill was Mr. Robert Lowe, who was an eminent scholar, and had what few members of Parliament then possessed, considerable Australian experience. Mr. Lowe denounced the Bill as a descent to the level plain of democracy, in which large and small objects, an oak and a bramble bush, appear very much of the same size. He was cheered to the echo, and undoubtedly obtained a great success as an orator.

The debate led to a split in the Liberal ranks. The opponents of the Reform Bill, some forty in number, headed by Mr. Lowe, Mr. Horsman, and Lord Elcho, were wittily termed "Adullamites" by Mr. Bright, who compared them to the assembly in the Cave of Adullam, when David called about him every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented. The name stuck like a bur, and prob-

ably did as much as anything else to prevent further disaffection in the Government party. But the defection of the "Adullamites" sealed the fate of the Ministry, who after carrying their Bill by only five votes, were defeated on an amendment to one of the clauses, and resigned on the 26th of June.

Mr. Gladstone's first experience as Leader of the House of Commons had not been a happy one. During the fierce debate on the Reform Bill I forwarded Mr. Gladstone some articles which I had written on the subject in *The Northern Whig*. These he found time to acknowledge in a very gracious letter written in his own hand. This was my first communication from Mr. Gladstone in my editorial capacity: it was far from being the last. Some early associations aided me in approaching him, and I was always treated with the greatest courtesy, even while supporting views different from his own.

In July, 1866, Lord Derby formed his third administration. During the autumn and winter which followed, the agitation for Reform was powerfully stimulated throughout the country, and when Parliament met for the next session Mr. Disraeli stated that the Government had decided on dealing with the question by thirteen resolutions. This seemed a safe policy: but a fortnight afterwards it had to be given up. Then a six pound franchise for boroughs and a twenty pound franchise for counties were proposed by the Ministers, a measure which was called the Ten Minutes Bill, because, according to Sir John Pakington, it had been agreed to in ten minutes by the Cabinet Council. This had also to be withdrawn, and a new measure was introduced by Mr. Disraeli giving a household and lodger franchise in boroughs, though it retained a property qualification in coun-

ties. This might be considered remarkable political progress on the part of the members of a Conservative government, who had declared the measure of their predecessors a dangerous concession to democracy. Household suffrage in the boroughs became law, and a new era may be said to have begun. The change as Lord Derby admitted was a great experiment, a "leap in the dark," which, however, had the recommendation to its supporters of "dishing the Whigs."

In February, 1868, Lord Derby retired through ill health and Mr. Disraeli became Prime Minister for the first time. His tenure of office was precarious, and only lasted a few months. During the session Mr. Gladstone in emphatic terms declared for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, which had been united with the English at the time of the Union, and proposed a series of resolutions which were carried against the Government. An appeal to the country followed. From this time Mr. Gladstone may be said to have devoted his best energies to an Irish policy of which Disestablishment, the Land Acts, and ultimately Irish Home Rule, were the successive steps which carried both himself and the large majority of his followers further than any of them intended to go, when, in the November of 1868, a new Parliament was returned with a large Liberal majority. When we look back, indeed, at the policy inaugurated by Mr. Gladstone in 1868, and developed with ever increasing surprises during so many years, we may be pardoned saying in well known words: "Where we are we know; where we are going, Heaven alone knows!"

While Mr. Gladstone was carrying out his Irish reforms events were maturing which suddenly altered

the face of Europe. For some years Prussia had been steadily working to bring about the constitution of a North German Empire. She may be said to have torn the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark. Austria had had to abandon her position as head, in more than a nominal sense, of the Germanic Confederation. In the war that followed Austria was defeated, and the complicated struggle resulted in the establishment of unity in North Germany, with a new Parliament at Berlin. The various German States appeared to have awakened from a long sleep. Count Bismarck, "Junker" Bismarck as he was called, had taken the lead in these important movements, which secured the victory of Prussia, and the formation of a powerful Kingdom destined to exercise vast influence over the progress of the world. In carrying out the great scheme of the unification of Germany, Bismarck had no regard for constitutional freedom. To political progress, in the ordinary sense, he could never be considered favourable. He would have said, as Mr. Disraeli once did, "Progress! Progress to what?"

Count Bismarck had realised his dreams, and had established a claim to a place among the first statesmen of his time. The keystone of his success lay in carrying out the high monarchical ideas of the Prussian sovereigns, especially of King William who became the first Emperor of Germany. The King of Hanover found that his hereditary rights were as dust in the balance, when weighed against the iron will of Bismarck bent on making Prussia supreme in North Germany.

It is strange that the Emperor of the French should at first have encouraged schemes which could not be compatible with the interests of

France, whose policy ought to have been to try to keep Germany divided. But while war was being waged by Prussia against Hanover, Saxony, and Austria, the French Emperor endeavoured to conclude a secret treaty with Bismarck, recognising the acquisitions which Prussia had made, and pledging France not to oppose a federal union of the Northern and Southern German States. The treaty was never concluded, and we can well believe was never seriously entertained by Bismarck. By one of the clauses the King of Prussia undertook to facilitate the acquisition of Luxemburg by France. This was a possession much coveted by Louis Napoleon, and in the following year he tried to purchase it from the King of Holland. But the proposal was strongly resented by Prussia. The province had formed part of the dissolved Germanic Confederation, and was of far too great strategic value to allow of its being transferred to France. The dispute was referred to a Conference of representatives of the Great Powers, who agreed upon the neutrality of the province, the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison, to whose presence the French Emperor had objected, and the destruction of the important fortifications. But the decision pleased neither of the contending parties, and the action of France rankled in the mind of Bismarck, who recognised in the feverish energies of the Emperor a growing danger to the interests of Germany.

In June, 1870, Isabella II abdicated the throne of Spain, and Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen, a brother of Prince Charles of Roumania, and connected with the Prussian dynasty, was nominated King, and accepted by the Spanish Regent and Minis-

try. A week later, owing to the strenuous opposition of France, he resigned the position. The antagonistic feeling against Germany was strong in France, and was fostered by the Emperor and his ministers to divert the growing discontent and disaffection which threatened to endanger the second Empire. Confident in the efficiency of his army, Louis Napoleon found in the refusal of the Prussian Government to give a guarantee that the claims of Prince Leopold would not again be put forward in Spain, a pretext for a war, which he hoped would restore the waning popularity of his rule. The Empress, herself a Spaniard, felt much indignation at a German Prince having been put forward as the candidate for the Spanish throne, and is credited with having exerted her influence to bring about the war, from which she was to be one of the chief and longest sufferers.

To Bismarck war was undoubtedly welcome. In it he saw the means by which to accomplish the work of uniting Germany in a great Empire. A successful war on a large scale was needed to raise the heat of national feeling to the point of fusion. If anything could have intensified German patriotism it would have been the aggressive and arrogant tone of the French, who boasted that they would cross the Rhine, and enter Berlin almost before their enemies could strike a blow in self-defence. By adroit diplomacy Bismarck succeeded in making it appear that the French Emperor was entirely the aggressor, and, as it now well known, employed unscrupulous and somewhat discreditable means to attain this end. But Louis Napoleon was an easy and ready dupe. He spared no efforts to precipitate the

conflict, and was justly reproached with making war like a conspirator. His policy was supported by large majorities in the French Chambers, and the protest entered by M. Thiers and a few others against the unseemly haste to shed blood, was half-hearted and ineffectual. An interval of less than a fortnight intervened between the announcement of the nomination of Prince Leopold to the Spanish throne, and the declaration of war by the Emperor, on the 15th of July, 1870. Though Louis Napoleon afterwards endeavoured to disavow responsibility for the war, into which he declared he had been forced by public opinion, there is now no doubt that war was premeditated both by the Emperor and by Bismarck, and that each for his own ends laboured to bring about one of the greatest national crimes of modern times.

It is not necessary to recapitulate the incidents of the war. The Emperor had been assured that everything was ready for the momentous contest: but it was soon found that the French army was lamentably deficient in transport and equipment, and inferior in numbers: while every day revealed more clearly the efficiency, the perfect organisation, the mobility of the German forces. The results for which Bismarck had worked were accomplished. Prussia was supported not only by the North German Parliament, but by the Southern States, and all Germany was in arms to support a united German nationality. The change was sudden and astounding; the political consequences could scarcely be overestimated. Count von Moltke, who commanded under the King of Prussia, had carefully matured his plans. In his address to the army the Emperor had spoken of the French

soldiers advancing to the old battle-grounds in Germany. But the campaign had scarcely begun when France instead of being the intruder was the invaded, and the contest was waged on French soil. Step by step the French had to retreat. The struggle was short but terrible, and showed at once the solidity of German strength, and the hollowness of imperial power in France.

On the 1st of September, little more than six weeks from the beginning of the war, the battle of Sedan was fought, and the following day the place capitulated. The Emperor surrendered to the King of Prussia, and the Second French Empire fell. Surrender was the only course possible, for Louis Napoleon knew that he could not return to Paris. An eminent diplomatist said: "This after all was the best thing he could do. In taking this step his mind appeared to have recovered a part of its former strength. He had for some time appeared to be in a state of mental degeneracy."

The French Emperor had shown himself to be a most unfortunate politician. Many years before, he had gone to war with Austria to free Italy from "the Alps to the Adriatic." After the defeat of the Austrians at Solferino, the pledge given to Italy was violated, and peace concluded at Villa Franca. He encouraged the establishment of the North German Federation, only to find it turned against himself; and by the war which he provoked, he played directly into the hands of his enemies, and brought about a united German Empire.

Some sixteen days after the great defeat and surrender, I visited Sedan. Very few Englishmen had then entered the gates since the town had been taken

possession of by the victorious Germans. The two regular armies were advancing on Paris, and Sedan was held by the Landwehr, or Militia. They seemed plain citizens, dressed in a dark and unpretentious uniform, engaged in what they evidently considered a serious duty. The Emperor's cherished mitrailleuses, which were to surprise the Prussians and give him an assured victory, had all been captured, and filled the great square of Sedan. I paid a visit to the Caserne d'Aspeld, occupied by the Anglo-American Ambulance Corps, of which my friend Sir William MacCormac, now the distinguished President of the Royal College of Surgeons, was the English chief. He showed me several wounded lying on beds, saying of one "This man will die," and of another, "This man will recover." His face was keenly scrutinised by his patients, as he thus whispered his opinion of what might be expected in each particular case. A French colonel to whom he had given great attention hailed him as "*Mon Sauveur*." I was asked to dine with the Medical Staff, being told that I could now expect some proper diet, but that had I come a week earlier I should have had to content myself with horse and water. But it was added that I should have to leave the table early, because after a fixed hour anyone who appeared outside the doors of the Caserne might expect to become the mark for a Prussian sentry. Under the circumstances I declined the honour.

The scene all round was tremendous. The dead had, indeed, been buried, and many swords belonging to them had been placed upon their graves. But the ground was still covered with the bodies of dead horses. The wounded filled the churches. The sisters of mercy were going from tent to tent. The

village of Bersailles which the Bavarians had taken by storm after crossing the river was a mere ruin, the altar of the church broken to pieces, and the edifice itself without a roof.

A revolution had occurred in Paris and a Republic been proclaimed. As soon as the news of the decisive battle of Sedan was known, the French troops which still remained in Rome were withdrawn, and the Italian forces, after a very slight resistance, entered the ancient capital of the world. The Pope refused the conciliatory offers made to him by King Victor-Emmanuel, and became virtually a prisoner in the Vatican. His temporal Government was at an end, the Papal Territories were added to the Kingdom, and the Unity of Italy after many vicissitudes became a great fact. At Versailles the King of Prussia was elected Emperor of Germany by the assembled Princes: and though France made many gallant attempts to retrieve her fortunes they were without avail, and Paris was forced to surrender. By the Treaty of Peace in 1871 Alsace and Lorraine had to be ceded to the victors, and an enormous pecuniary indemnity paid. These had, indeed, been stirring months, into which many great events were crowded. The aspect of Europe had undergone no small change. Germany had been consolidated, France crushed and two provinces wrested from her, the Second Empire overthrown, a Republic erected in its place, Italy united, the temporal power of the Pope destroyed, and Rome created the capital of Victor-Emmanuel's kingdom.

During the progress of the Franco-German War, Russia seized the opportunity to repudiate the article of the Treaty of Paris guaranteeing the neutrality

of the Black Sea. Her desire to free herself from the obligations imposed upon her at the conclusion of the Crimean War was natural, but the manner in which she announced her decision was ominous and offensive. It showed an utter disregard of moral right, and a contempt for international engagements which nothing could justify. By the Treaty of Paris both Turkey and Russia undertook not to maintain military or maritime arsenals on the shores of the Black Sea, of which the waters and ports, "thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation," were "formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power." We may doubt whether the Western Powers acted wisely in imposing these conditions upon Russia, who might naturally claim a right over the waters that washed her Southern shores. But having signed the Treaty of Paris she could not legitimately repudiate any part of it without the consent of the other Powers. That consent was not asked. At a moment when she knew the Treaty could not be enforced, and that there was no possibility of an alliance being formed against her, Russia suddenly declared that she would no longer be bound by the article restricting her rights in the Black Sea. The precedent was an evil one, and was a serious set back in political progress. To extricate the Western Powers from the humiliating position in which they had been placed, Prince Bismarck suggested that a conference should be held in London to discuss the question raised by the Russian Government. With the assent of the British Ministry this was done, Earl Granville diplomatically assuming that the Conference was to assemble "without any foregone conclusion as to its results." This

polite fiction was kept up to the end, and in March, 1871, a treaty was agreed to, abrogating the clause of the Treaty of Paris for the neutralisation of the Black Sea. How far the honour of the Western Powers was saved by thus doing formally what had already been done by Russia in an illegal and offensive manner, it would be difficult to determine. There may have been nothing better to do under the circumstances, but the transaction was not a pleasant one, and did much to discredit the value of international agreements.

The new German Empire under the Emperor William I., became a powerful and united state. But under the guidance of Bismarck, created a Prince and Chancellor of the Empire by his grateful sovereign, the course of events did not tend to what is deemed progress by those who believed in the civil, political, and religious liberty of the individual. With the cause of constitutional freedom Bismarck had no sympathy. On more than one occasion he declared that Germany was not to be governed on British methods. From the establishment of the Empire till the present time there has been a struggle for supremacy in Germany between the Crown and the Parliament. Hitherto the Crown has maintained its ground, but it has only been able to do so by many arbitrary and oppressive acts. During the nineteen years Bismarck remained at the head of affairs Germany made vast strides in material progress, and attained a foremost position among the nations of the world. But though the iron rule of the Chancellor was borne with patience by the majority of the people, it met with strenuous opposition from many quarters, and produced results which even German statesmen could not regard with equanimity.

In 1872 the number of young men who emigrated to avoid conscription was so large that the movement was forbidden by the Government. The order was one that could only be enforced to a limited degree, and was not of a character calculated to conciliate public feeling. The steady increase of the army was accompanied by severely repressive measures against the press and freedom of speech; and the burden of taxation pressed heavily upon the masses, among whom the democratic spirit continued to grow. Between 1879 and 1884 the emigration increased fivefold, and there were many signs of gathering discontent, which found expression in socialistic agitation, attempts upon the life of the Emperor, and treasonable plots.

But if little political progress was made during these years by Germany, her growth in other respects was amazing. In spite of emigration the population has increased by leaps and bounds, rising from forty-one millions in 1871 to over forty-nine and a half millions in 1890. The growth of population is rightly held to be an index of the prosperity of a State, and viewed in this light Imperial Germany presents a striking contrast to Republican France, where the increase has been merely nominal. The commercial expansion of Germany has also been enormous, and in arts and manufactures she has largely displaced her rivals in the markets of the world. Adaptability and thoroughness of workmanship have had much to do in bringing about this success, which has been fairly earned, and is likely not only to be maintained but increased at the expense of less enterprising nations. But the qualities that have obtained superiority in German products and manufactures are the direct result of a thorough and

practical system of education, by which the German in every walk of life is equipped to compete successfully against foreign rivals. No other nation has realized so fully that knowledge is power, or has succeeded to the same extent in bringing public instruction to bear upon the practical needs and occupations of the people.

In March, 1887, the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria, and Italy, which had been proposed and partly agreed to five years before, was signed. Of an offensive and defensive character it bound together three powerful states in a league which undoubtedly did much for the maintenance of peace, and therefore for the cause of progress. It had another important result. Left out in the cold, France and Russia were naturally drawn into closer relations, from which the unsettled Republic hoped to gain advantages which must have been regarded with cynical amusement at St. Petersburg. But though we may doubt whether any alliance of material benefit to either nation is possible between two governments so radically different in constitution and temperament, France and Russia are not likely to forget the lesson of the Triple Alliance, and the friendly relations established between Paris and St. Petersburg are still maintained, and sedulously cultivated by the French people. The Triple Alliance which would have expired in 1892 was renewed for a further term of six years, and was further strengthened by a series of commercial treaties between the three Powers.

William I, "the great Emperor who founded Germany's unity," to quote the words of Prince Bismarck, died in March, 1888. The Crown Prince Frederick had already been smitten by a fatal dis-

ease, and after a reign of less than three months succumbed to cancer of the larynx. He was succeeded by his son the present Emperor William II, who is to-day undoubtedly the most striking personality in Europe. Under his rule the struggle between the Crown and the Parliament has not diminished, though it is conducted with less acrimony than during the years that Bismarck was at the head of the Government. The vigour, audacity, and personal ascendancy of the Emperor have proved irresistible, and have given a great impetus to German trade and commerce. If the country had not enjoyed a period of remarkable prosperity, it is a question whether the rule of the Emperor would have been attended by the great success which has marked its progress. Between the imperial pretensions of the Emperor, who claims to rule by "Divine Right," and publicly denounces opponents of his political policy, and the limitations of a monarchy established to govern under a Parliament elected by manhood suffrage, there is a wide gulf, which it might have been thought even the daring genius of William II could not have bridged over. Had the Emperor faltered at the outset, had he ever shown signs of weakness or hesitancy, the experiment of ruling on the lines he has pursued would have failed. But his energy and firm belief in his divine mission have carried him through, and enabled him to mould the people to his will. In their Emperor the Germans recognise the embodiment of national ambition, and material progress. He has made the army even more effective and powerful than he found it: he has created a German mercantile marine: he has thrown over the chilling doctrine of Bismarck that Germany does not want colonies, that the Empire is complete and has

nothing to desire, and has replaced it by a glowing policy, admirably calculated to take captive the popular imagination, of a world-wide German Empire, protected by a powerful navy, and bound together by commercial ties of colossal magnitude. It must not, however, be assumed that the Germans view the anomalies of their present political system with indifference. Patience may be recognised as one of their great virtues. At present they have little to gain and perhaps much to lose by defying the Emperor. The proverb that everything comes to those who wait, may in their case be found to have a very pertinent application. But there can be no doubt that in time the political instincts of the race will assert themselves, and that Germany will emerge from a state of political bondage into the freedom that can alone be secured by a constitutional government that draws its inspiration from the people.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOLDEN DAYS OF LIBERALISM.

EVENTS on the Continent did not deter Mr. Gladstone from undertaking the reforms at home which he believed demanded immediate attention. In the Parliament which assembled at the close of 1868 the Liberals had a very large majority. Reform was in the air, and the new Ministry set about its task with extraordinary energy. The first question dealt with was the disestablishment and partial disendowment of the Irish Church, on which Mr. Gladstone had turned the late Government out of office. Few measures have ever excited more bitter feeling, or called down upon British statesmen more vehement denunciations. Led by Mr. Disraeli the Opposition fought the Bill with undaunted courage, though it was evident from the first that in face of the commanding majority supporting Mr. Gladstone resistance was futile. The will of the representative chamber was so strongly expressed that the House of Lords did not feel justified in throwing out the measure, which therefore passed into law.

In one of his electioneering speeches Mr. Gladstone had declared that "the Irish upas-tree" had three great branches; the State Church, the Land Tenure System, and the System of Education. Compared with these all other reforms appeared to him of secondary impor-

tance. The first session of Parliament had been devoted to the Church question, and in 1870 Mr. Gladstone introduced the Irish Land Bill, by which tenants were given a certain property or partnership in the farms they tilled. The measure was to a considerable extent based upon what was known as the Ulster custom of the three F's,—Fair Rents, Free Sale, and Fixity of Tenure. It was not regarded as complete, and in subsequent years had to be supplemented by a series of other laws to deal with the highly complicated and artificial conditions it created. Opinion is still divided as to whether the revolutionary principle embodied in the Bill was a wise one. But apart from this it may be admitted that the Irish Land System was a most unsatisfactory one, and called for drastic treatment in some form. In Parliament the Bill was not strongly opposed, and in due course secured the Royal Assent. In dealing with the third branch of his upas-tree Mr. Gladstone found more difficulty. His Irish University Bill satisfied nobody, and displeased almost everyone. The difficulty was to satisfy the friends of non-sectarian education and the supporters of denominational education. Mr. Gladstone in 1873 sought to effect a compromise between these two conflicting principles, but without success, and his Bill was rejected by a small majority. Though nearly a generation has elapsed since that time the question still remains to be solved, and the difficulties by which it is surrounded are so great as to make any government hesitate before undertaking the task with which even Mr. Gladstone was unable to cope successfully.

Though opinions may differ upon the Irish measures brought forward at this time by Mr. Gladstone, there can be no doubt that other and not less impor-

tant reforms effected by the Liberal Ministry are now regarded with unanimous favour. The Elementary Education Act, the Ballot Act, the abolition of the purchase system in the Army, the University Tests Act, the Licensing Act, and the Judicature Act, were all measures of the first importance, and contributed very largely to political progress.

The neglect of education for the masses of the people had long been a discredit to Great Britain. On this question of vital importance she was behind every other civilised country. Until the memorable year of 1870 the State had done little or nothing for primary education, and even the small sums doled out by Parliament were applied in ways best calculated to effect the least good. For centuries the governing classes had been accustomed to look upon education as an excellent thing for the rich and a very bad thing for the poor. The old feudal feeling of the necessity of keeping people in their "place," was very strong, and has by no means died out even at the close of the century. Through the efforts first of enlightened individuals, and afterwards of all the chief religious bodies, a considerable number of schools were established for the benefit of poor children. The movement continued to spread, but it carried with it the stigma of charity, and the education given was of a pitifully meagre character. Little or nothing was taught beyond the "three Rs." reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the doctrines of religion. In seeking to assist the poor their masters wished to do nothing which would enable anyone to "break his birth's invidious bar," nothing which would enable the masses to encroach upon the rights and privileges of the classes. That the work accomplished

by the sectarian and non-sectarian voluntary schools prior to 1870 was of extreme value, and deserves grateful remembrance, we would be the last to deny. Had it not been for these efforts the poor would have been steeped to the lips in ignorance. But the system of education by charitable effort was fundamentally wrong, and was incompatible with the sense of independence which should animate the individual members of a great nation.

With the extension of the franchise, and the broadening of political progress, new ideas sprang up. Reference has already been made to the increase of the Parliamentary grant to education in 1846. The chief objects of the proposals in that year were to improve the qualifications of teachers, and to place all existing agencies deserving of help from the State on a footing of equality. There had been much alarm among Nonconformists lest schools supported by the Church of England should obtain unfair advantages from the State. This was now set at rest, and no departure has ever been attempted from the wise policy then inaugurated. To Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth is also due the evolution of the principle that the fullest freedom possible should be given to each locality to manage its own educational affairs; the State merely giving grants in aid upon compliance with well defined conditions. In 1856 an important step was taken by the formation of the Education Department, charged with the care of elementary instruction, and the development of Science and Art, and by the creation of the office of Vice-President of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, a clumsy title under which the chief Minister of Education, responsible to Parlia-

ment for the expenditure of all grants of public money, still continues to be disguised. In 1861 a revised code of regulations was issued by Mr. Lowe. Under the new Code all grants were to be made in future to managers, and direct relation between teachers and the Department ceased. Government Inspectors of all State-aided schools were appointed; six standards of efficiency in "the three R's" were created; and the evil principle of payment by results, was established. But the spirit in which the subject of national education was still regarded, may be gathered from the remark of Mr. Lowe, who in proposing his measure in the House of Commons, said: "I do not promise that the system shall be economical, or that it will prove efficient. But if it is not efficient it will be economical; and if it is not economical it will certainly be efficient." Mr. Lowe was not mistaken. His Revised Code proved to be both economical and inefficient.

Up to this time the British Government had confined its efforts to giving a small amount of State-aid to secular or denominational schools founded and maintained by the efforts of private individuals or voluntary bodies. No attempt had been made to supply schools where the voluntary system did not meet the needs of the community, and more than two-thirds of the children throughout the country were absolutely without any opportunity of instruction. This deplorable state of things was transformed by the Elementary Education Bill passed by Mr. W. E. Forster in 1870. The measure laid the foundation of a system of national education, and must be considered a very important step in political progress. The new Act provided for the establishment in Eng-

land and Wales of popularly elected School Boards in every district where the number of existing schools was inadequate, with powers to levy local rates, to build and maintain schools, to frame bye-laws, to compel the attendance of all children between the ages of five and twelve, and, where the needs of the population rendered it absolutely necessary, to provide free instruction for the children of parents unable to pay any fees. Distinctive religious instruction was forbidden in all Board Schools, and in existing Voluntary Schools the rights of parents were safeguarded by the enforcement of a conscience-clause, enabling any child to be withdrawn from all religious teaching. Subject to this and other moderate provisions regarding efficiency and inspection, the existing schools under the charge of religious or other bodies, continued to be recognised by the State, and were granted by comparison with what had gone before a generous amount of public support. Important changes were also made in the number of subjects of instruction, which have since repeatedly been increased. The measure aroused no small amount of opposition. The majority of Nonconformists were strongly in favour of a strictly secular system of national elementary education. By an even larger section of the community education divorced from definite religious instruction was considered an unmixed evil. This view was shared by many Nonconformists, and was generally accepted by members of the Church of England and by Roman Catholics. But in spite of much angry controversy the Bill was carried, and may now be regarded as having embodied a wise compromise in dealing with a very difficult and complicated position. It dealt a most effective blow to the narrow and

selfish idea that educational advantages should be kept in the hands of the privileged classes, and that it was unwise to afford the poor facilities for rising above the depressing circumstances of the rank in which they were born. In the energies it stimulated, the closely barred doors it flung open, the sense of independence and self-respect it created, the higher intelligence and interest in the rights and duties of citizenship it fostered, the Elementary Education Act is the most momentous, wide-reaching, and perpetually beneficial measure passed in England during the century.

The session of 1871 was scarcely a less important one in the history of political progress. By the University Test Act the ancient Universities were thrown open to all students without distinction as to creed, and one more step was achieved in the long struggle of the Nonconformists for religious equality. It is difficult now to understand the distrust and dislike with which less than a generation ago the proposal to substitute the Ballot for the old system of open voting at election, was viewed. But, like all abuses, the public nomination and election of candidates for Parliament and Municipal bodies, died hard. Its supporters believed that there was something unmanly and un-English in the Ballot; that its adoption would give rise to many evils, and sap the independence of public life. In view of what Mr. Forster's Ballot Act accomplished it is amazing that such reactionary ideas should have prevailed up to the last. The progress of the measure was resisted with great determination in the House of Commons, where the Bill was secretly disliked by many of Mr. Gladstone's supporters, and openly denounced by the Conservatives. Re-

jected by the Lords the Bill was reintroduced the following session and finally added to the Statute Book. Few measures have worked a greater change in British political life. Before its adoption, bribery, corruption, impersonation, drunkenness, and rioting were inseparable features of every election. Anything more brutal, more demoralising, and more calculated to arouse the worst passions of political parties, than the older system of conducting elections, it would be difficult to imagine. A very large number of those to whom the franchise had been extended were prevented from exercising the trust committed to them in accordance with their conscientious convictions. The tenant went to the poll in fear of his landlord, the workmen of his employer, the tradesmen of his customers. "Vote early and vote often" was advice given by electioneering agents in all earnestness. The venal elector sold his vote to the highest bidder, and often "sold" the buyer. Huge sums were spent at every contest, and effected the ruin of candidates and the destruction of political morality. Between such a state of things and the condition brought about by the adoption of the ballot, there is one of the most striking contrasts of recent times. Neither the ballot, nor the laws afterwards passed against bribery and corruption, have secured absolute purity in the electoral system. Human ingenuity cannot devise restrictions which human depravity cannot evade. But the ballot put an end to the wholesale corruption which formerly existed, and secured freedom of action for every man who desired to exercise his rights as a citizen in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

In 1870, the advantages of open competition for

filling nearly all positions in the Civil Service, were formally recognised by an Order in Council. The following year Mr. Gladstone undertook the abolition of the purchase system for Officers' Commissions in the Army, and the substitution for it of admission by competitive examination and promotion according to merit. The purchase system had existed for several centuries. It had been prohibited by William III, but was legally recognised in 1702, and some years later regulations were issued and a fixed scale of prices established. An officer bought his way into the army and purchased his promotion step by step. Only in the case of a vacancy arising by the death of a senior officer, could a poor man, whatever might be his merits, secure advancement without payment. As the number of men desirous of entering the Service increased, commissions were enhanced in value, and the scale fixed by law was entirely ignored. The command of the Army was therefore almost exclusively in the hands of the richer classes. No poor man however great his ability could obtain entrance to that charmed circle, except by the patronage of the wealthy. This anomalous system Mr. Gladstone determined to sweep away. Mr. Cardwell, the Minister of War, introduced into the House of Commons an important Bill dealing with the evil, and embodying a scheme for the reconstruction of the Army. The measure was bitterly opposed, and eventually the more complicated clauses dealing with army reorganization had to be abandoned. In its reduced form the Bill only dealt with the abolition of the purchase system. It was passed after a protracted struggle by the Commons, but was rejected by the House of Lords, on the plea that the Peers were un-

willing to agree to the proposal until a complete scheme of army reorganization was before them. There are probably few persons who will not now admit that the reform was a very necessary and important one. But whatever were the evils of the system to be abolished they had existed for generations, and could very well have been tolerated for another year. There was nothing in the circumstances to warrant or excuse the proceeding adopted by the Prime Minister. Mr. Gladstone was ill-fitted to brook opposition from any quarter, least of all from the House of Lords, whose existence he never hesitated to threaten whenever its decisions came in conflict with his imperious will. To defeat the Peers seemed to him an end worthy of any sacrifice; even the sacrifice of the great constitutional principles for which he professed so deep an attachment. The system of purchase in the army had been created and existed solely by Royal Warrant. When the Lords threw out his Bill, Mr. Gladstone took the audacious and unprecedented step of advising the Queen to cancel the Royal Warrant which made purchase legal. The Government were victorious, the Lords defeated, the system of purchase in the Army was abolished. But great and desirable as was the reform, it may be thought that Mr. Gladstone bought his victory at too high a price. His action was undoubtedly legal; it was unquestionably unjustifiable. It stands out alone as the only instance in modern times of a Minister abusing the prerogative of the Crown to over-ride the decision of Parliament. It is one of Mr. Gladstone's acts which shook the confidence of many of his supporters, and would most gladly be forgotten by his most staunch admirers.

Much had been done to promote political progress, but as must always be the case the Ministry in carrying out a series of important reforms had created for itself many enemies, and aroused the opposition of many powerful interests. There was scarcely a section of the Liberal Party throughout the country that had not been irritated or alienated. In Ireland the Disestablishment of the Church had aroused the antagonism of many Protestant Liberals, and the Land Act had alienated large numbers of Mr. Gladstone's supporters, while failing to conciliate the Nationalists. The Nonconformists as a body had been offended by the granting of public money in aid of sectarian education under Mr. Forster's Act, while the creation of the Secular Board Schools had wounded the convictions of many religious people of all denominations. By the privileged classes the abolition of purchase in the Army was regarded as an encroachment upon their rights, and the manner in which the reform had been carried was strongly condemned by independent Liberals. These and other causes had sown dissension in the Liberal ranks, and had shaken the confidence of the Ministry in itself. The spirits of the leaders were damped, and the administration no longer possessed the cohesion and energy which had enabled it repeatedly to triumph over all obstacles.

As the enthusiasm for reform died away Mr. Gladstone lost his hold upon the sympathies of the mass of the nation. He was not a conciliatory leader. The intensity of his own convictions swept all before it. Few of his colleagues were fully taken into his confidence; and the supporters over whom he exercised so remarkable an influence, were repeatedly surprised by

the policy suddenly sprung upon them. By Mr. Disraeli the members of the Government were compared to "a range of extinct volcanoes." Their energies were spent, and the work of the greatest reforming administration of modern times was done.

Throughout the country a reactionary spirit had unmistakably set in. The cause of Conservatism was in the ascendant, and the energy and brilliancy with which Mr. Disraeli carried on his attacks put new life and hope into the Opposition. In the debate that led to the defeat of the Irish University Education Bill Mr. Disraeli taunted the Government with having mistaken "the clamour of the Nonconformists for the voice of the nation." "You have now had four years of it," he said. "You have despoiled churches. You have threatened every corporation, and every endowment in the country. You have examined into everybody's affairs. You have criticised every profession, and vexed every trade. No one is certain of his property and nobody knows what duties he may have to perform to-morrow. I believe that the people of this country have had enough of the policy of confiscation." The same charges, in even more exaggerated language were reiterated by Mr. Disraeli in a letter to Lord Grey de Wilton published in the Autumn, the leader of the Opposition adding that the country had "made up its mind to close this career of plundering and blundering."

On the defeat of the University Bill Mr. Gladstone's Government resigned. Mr. Disraeli was sent for to form another administration: but wisely declined to undertake the task under the existing conditions in the House of Commons, where his party were in a minority. The Queen had to request Mr.

Gladstone to retain office, which he did with much reluctance. His administration, which had carried so many measures of reform, had received its death blow; and the blow was all the more bitter from the fact that it had been inflicted by professed friends. Various changes were made in the Ministry. Mr. Gladstone became Chancellor of the Exchequer as well as First Lord of the Treasury; Mr. Lowe was transferred to the Home Office, and Mr. Bright joined the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. There were other changes of less importance. But the rearrangement of the Ministry did not revive public confidence. The bye-elections showed that the tide of public feeling had turned against the Government, and in January, 1874, without waiting for the meeting of Parliament, which had been summoned to assemble within a few days, Mr. Gladstone suddenly decided to appeal to the country. A dissolution was not expected. It took the Liberals and many of Mr. Gladstone's own colleagues by surprise, and proved an unpopular and disastrous step. When the elections were over the Conservatives were found to have a majority of over fifty, and the great Liberal Administration was extinguished.

During the last years of Mr. Gladstone's Government a new and very important movement, destined to exercise far reaching influence upon political events, had sprung up in Ireland. According to Mr. Justin McCarthy the Home Rule organisation was at first mainly inspired by Irish Protestants. "The Disestablishment of the Church had filled most of the Protestants of Ireland with hatred of Mr. Gladstone, and distrust of the Imperial Parliament and English parties. It was therefore thought by some of them

that the time had come when Irishmen of all sects and parties had better trust to themselves and to their united efforts than to any English minister, parliament, or party. Partly in a petulant mood, partly in despondency, partly out of genuine patriotic impulse, some of the Irish Protestants set going the movement for Home Rule. But although the actual movement came into being in that way, the desire for a native parliament had always lived among large classes of the Irish people." Irishmen of moderate views "welcomed the Home Rule movement, and conscientiously believed that it would open the way to a genuine reconciliation between England and Ireland on conditions of fair co-partnership. . . . The leadership of the new party came almost as a matter of course into the hands of Mr. Butt, who returned to Parliament after a considerable time of exile from political life. Mr. Butt was a man of great ability, legal knowledge, and historical culture. He had begun life as a Conservative and as an opponent of O'Connell. . . . There was not then in Irish politics any man who could pretend to be his rival. He was a speaker at once powerful and plausible; he had a thorough knowledge of the constitutional history, and the technical procedures of Parliament, and he could talk to an Irish monster meeting with vivacity and energy."* Mr. McCarthy perhaps over-rates the amount of Protestant support which the Home Rule movement received in the early days of its existence. Mr. Butt was, it is true, a Protestant, and the son of an Irish Protestant clergyman, and his name and ability attracted a number of his co-religionists to

*Justin McCarthy's *A History of our own Times*, Vol. II pp. 397-8.

the standard of Home Rule. But the Home Rule League founded by Mr. Butt in 1872 differed very materially from the movement of later years. From the first Mr. Butt was opposed by the more extreme and violent section of his party. His refusal to enter on the path of unconstitutional agitation soon diminished his authority as a leader, and when he died in 1879 he had practically ceased to control a movement which was being promoted by methods he had repeatedly condemned.

The early days of the new Parliament, with Mr. Disraeli as Prime Minister, were in marked contrast to the strenuous and stormy time that had preceded them. What Sir Wilfred Lawson called an "almost holy calm" prevailed. Circumstances seemed to smile upon the Conservative Ministry, and to frown upon the defeated and dejected Liberals. The Ashantee War was brought to a speedy and successful conclusion by Sir Garnet Wolseley; the famine in India was checked; and the financial year ended with a surplus of some six millions. These were desirable legacies bequeathed to the Government by their predecessors in Office, but they added not a little to the credit of the Conservative Administration.

From the opening of the session Mr. Gladstone appeared ill at ease as leader of the Opposition. He seemed to share the dejection of his party. There was no question of sufficient national interest to arouse his energies and excite his enthusiasm. As he had dissolved Parliament in a moment of petulance, so he now suddenly announced his intention of retiring from the leadership of his party. In a letter to Lord Granville he stated that he "could not contemplate an unlimited extension of active political service,"

and that it might, for a variety of reasons personal to himself, be necessary to divest himself of "all responsibilities of leadership at no distant time." He added that during that session he could not give "more than an occasional attendance in the House of Commons." The announcement was received with dismay by the Liberals. Mr Gladstone had been their recognised leader for scarcely ten years, but he had dominated the party so completely by his strong personality and commanding talents, that it did not seem possible to do without his inspiring guidance.

At this time a visit to Ireland of Mr. Disraeli had been much talked of, and largely commented upon in the Irish Press. Respecting it Mr. Macknight wrote several articles, which he sent to Mr. Gladstone, who acknowledged them in the following letter:

Hawarden Castle, Chester.

October 2nd. 1874.

Dear Mr. Macknight,

I am very much obliged to you for calling my attention to the able articles in *The Northern Whig*.

I will say nothing of their much too indulgent reference to myself. Perhaps I ought to be equally reticent on their criticisms of Mr. Disraeli's visit to Ireland, and of the mode in which it has been treated by large portions of the Press. But I cannot withhold the expression of my warm sympathy with a powerful, and what is more a manful, protest against imposture. This is the stuff of which sound and healthy political parties are made: such diet is much needed: and is good for us all. Believe me,

Very faithfully yours,

W. E. GLADSTONE.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE "UNSPEAKABLE" TURK.

THE calm which marked the first years of the Parliament under the leadership of Mr. Disraeli was destined to be of short duration, and to be succeeded by events which excited extraordinary feeling not only in Great Britain, but throughout the civilised world. Though it might sink out of sight for a time the Eastern Question still existed, and time only seemed to render it more difficult and complicated. Twenty years had passed since the end of the Crimean War. During that time a very moderate effort on the part of Turkey would have enabled her to carry out many of the reforms she had promised to effect. But nothing was done. The Porte fell back upon its old policy of impassive defiance. By an astute combination of submission and obstinacy, of professions of reform, and callous indifference to every pledge undertaken, by skilfully playing upon the mutual jealousies of the Christian Powers opposed to her, Turkey had eluded her obligations, and set the allied Powers of Europe at defiance. The Sultan had been solemnly warned that unless the reforms promised in 1856 were carried out the integrity of the Ottoman Empire would be endangered. But the warning passed unheeded, because the Sultan believed that if Russia invaded Turkey her action would be resisted

by Great Britain, and possibly by other Powers.

The Crimean War and the Treaty of 1856, which it was hoped had settled the Eastern Question, and secured some measure of freedom for the oppressed subjects of Turkey, accomplished neither object. The results were entirely of a negative character. Great Britain had made great sacrifices to attain definite objects, and those objects were as far from realisation as ever. Russian aggression, it is true, had been checked for a time; but the material concessions wrung from the Tzar were gradually being regained, and in the end it may be said that Russia recovered everything she had previously lost, and that we lost every substantial benefit for which we had fought. That we had done practically nothing by the Treaty of 1856 to secure the protection of the Christian subjects of the Sultan is abundantly evident. Within a year of the signature of the Treaty our Consul in Bosnia felt impelled to report upon the abuses in that province. In forwarding this consular report to our Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Clarendon said, "Her Majesty's Government know by experience the utter inutility of appealing on such matters to the Porte; but the Turkish Government should be made aware that if this systematic misgovernment, and persecution of Christians, and violation of engagements continue, it will be impossible to arrest the progress of the opinion which is now manifesting itself, that Mohammedan rule is incompatible with civilisation and humanity, and can no longer be endured." But neither protests nor threats moved the Sultan, who had long grown accustomed to hard words, and felt confident that his Christian advisers

were too jealous of each other to render it possible for them to put their threats into action.

The reports of British Diplomatic and Consular agents in Turkey, between 1856 and 1874, are filled with details of the misery and degradation of the Christian populations. In his report upon the condition of the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina our Consul, Mr. Holmes, stated that the lower grades of Turkish officials had no means of living except by extortion, "while the Porte seemed knowingly to encourage the oppressions by which they really live." "The rapacity or corruption of the governing classes keep the country in a state of penury and misery; no advance seems to be made in prosperity, education, or civilisation." In the course of an able report upon the state of Koordistan in 1869, Consul Taylor describing the hatred and contempt in which the Moslems held Christian inhabitants, said the latter dared not make complaints of ill usage. Should they do so, "sooner or later they would, both in person and property, suffer more, endure infinitely greater calamities than those they originally complained of." "The Christians, in addition to deprivation of property, daily jeopardise their lives, and what is more terrible, the honour of their females, in struggles for existence; trials from which the Moslems are exempt." Consul Zohrab stated that "fanaticism, cruelty, and dishonesty, are the only incentives to action which move the men who are sent to administer this unhappy country." General Sir Fenwick Williams, whose valiant defence of Kars against the Russians was one of the remarkable military incidents of the Crimean War, describing the result of his personal observation

of the condition of the territories around Erzeroum, wrote: "The whole body of cavasses, whether employed as police in the capital and other cities and towns of the Empire, or in the provinces as the agents through whom the revenue is collected, constitutes an engine of tyranny perhaps unequalled in the world. No language can portray the infamy which characterises the life and character of this body of men."*

This is only one side of the picture. There is a darker one represented by the Syrian Massacres, of which the details are as terrible as those associated with the Bulgarian atrocities. Captain Paynter of H. M. S. "Exmouth," in an official despatch, reported that he had succeeded in saving "from the horrors of famine, murder, and violation, upwards of 2,200 Christian women and children. . . . The whole of those wounded were shot or sabred flying from the town after their husbands and male children had been slaughtered."† In the deplorable scenes enacted all over the Lebanon, the Turkish soldiery appear to have been much more brutal than the Druses. Hundreds of men were put to the sword by the Druses, but generally speaking they did not ill-treat or slaughter women, or ruthlessly massacre children. These darker crimes were committed by the Turkish soldiery, whose excesses in Syria were encouraged by the authorities.

Between the time of the Treaty of Paris and the outbreak of the storm in Bulgaria, there had been a great development of national feeling throughout

**Turkey*, XVII, 1877, No. 6. p. 3.

†*Papers relating to Disturbances in Syria*, June, 1860, p. 42.

Europe. This extension of national life had affected the people of the Balkan provinces almost as powerfully as the Italians. Russian influences also had been at work. It was not in the interests of Russian policy that the Christian races of the Balkans should remain quiet, and under the continued oppression of the Turks the populations were in a fever of unrest. Insurrections were invariably followed by massacres, and the corruption and extravagance of the last years of Abdul-Mejid stimulated the general discontent. Between 1861 and 1875 the Empire under Abdul-Aziz sank into an almost abject condition, by which the Balkan provinces profited to some extent. By a union between Moldavia and Wallachia the State of Roumania was formed, and in 1866 the united principalities expelled their ruler and chose Prince Charles of Hohenzollern in his stead. A determined rebellion in Crete lasted for nearly two years, and owing to the assistance afforded the insurgents by Greece, was suppressed with difficulty. In Servia, already autonomous within her own boundaries, a desire for independence was rapidly asserting itself. A demand in 1867 for the withdrawal of the Turkish garrisons which still held many Servian fortresses, proved irresistible, and the Sultan, whose feeble energies were fully occupied in Crete, reluctantly granted the concession. An insurrection in Herzegovina aroused excitement throughout Bosnia, Servia, and Montenegro, and was stimulated by the financial embarrassments of the Porte, which in 1875 was compelled partly to repudiate its debts. Abdul-Aziz was deposed, and committed suicide. He was succeeded by his nephew, the imbecile Murad V, who was speedily supplanted by his brother Abdul-Hamid II. For

years the tension had been growing; it had now become unbearable. The Slavonic populations were in revolt; the continued misrule and extravagant expenditure of the Sultans had alienated public opinion throughout Europe, and it seemed as though the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire really was at hand. "The sick man" of the Emperor Nicholas was still alive, but to many spectators the end appeared ominously near.

Year after year in language not less urgent and emphatic than that employed by Lord Clarendon, British ministers continued to warn and menace Turkey, and always with the same result. The torrent of misrule continued unchecked. In 1873 Sir H. Elliot, our Ambassador at Constantinople, reported that the promised "nominal equality of Mussulmans and Christians before the law is now, in most provinces, more illusory than it had been some years ago." There seemed to be an inherent incapacity for reform in the governing classes of Turkey. If massacre and oppression were accidental and transitory, if they were the result of a sudden outbreak of fanaticism, which, however deplorable, would cease when the paroxysm of passion had spent itself, we might have hoped that in time the wrongs of the people would be righted, and that relapses into savagery and bloodthirstiness would gradually become impossible. But that was not the case. What was done in Syria and in the Balkan provinces on occasions which so deeply moved the public mind, were only representations on a gigantic scale of what went on daily, monthly, and yearly on a small scale throughout the Turkish Empire.

Two attempts had been made to bring the com-

bined influence of the Powers to bear on Turkey. In December, 1875, Count Andrassy had drawn up on behalf of Austria, Germany, and Russia, a Note, in which it was declared that none of the reforms promised by the Porte had been carried out, and that if Servia and Montenegro were not to be drawn into insurrection, it was necessary for the great Powers to make clear "their firm resolution to arrest the movement" which threatened to involve the East. France and Italy joined with the three Emperors in the presentation of the Note of the Porte, and in demanding a written engagement that its provisions would be carried out. Lord Derby, after considerable delay, directed the British Ambassador at Constantinople to give the Note "a general support." Four out of the five demands made by the Powers were at once conceded by the Sultan, and an Imperial Iradé was issued to give them effect. Six weeks later Sir Henry Elliot informed Lord Derby that "while the professions of the Government have been of a determination to raise the administration of justice, its measures seem calculated to farther debase it."

Although the British Government, who had joined in the Andrassy Note with reluctance, might remain indifferent to the renewed perfidy of the Porte, the other Powers were not disposed to accept the frustration of their plans. A conference of the representatives of the six Powers was convened at Berlin, and in May, 1876, a further remonstrance known as the Berlin Memorandum was drawn up. To this the British Cabinet felt unable to agree. The refusal of Great Britain to accept the Memorandum was received with dismay by the other Powers, and the action of Lord Derby in disclosing to the Porte the demands and

menaces which it embodied, and in separating England from the other Powers, unquestionably encouraged Turkey in her contemptuous indifference.

In May, 1876, a revolt broke out in Bulgaria. It was never a formidable movement. Mr. Baring, who visited the district in July and drew up an official report for the British Government, states that the insurrection "was neither so formidable as the Turks in their first panic thought it was, nor so utterly insignificant" as many people made it out to be. "The insurgents put themselves in the wrong by killing defenceless Turks and committing other acts of insurrection, but the resistance they made when actually attacked was hardly worthy of the name." To stamp out the rebellion Azis Pasha who was in command of the disturbed district asked for four regiments of regular troops, but as these were not forthcoming, the Vali of Adrianople called on the Mussulmans to arm. This action there is little doubt was taken with the approval of the Turkish Government. The volunteers consisted chiefly of the Circassians who by permission of the Porte had settled in the country in 1864. They were half-barbarous savages, who soon became the curse of Bulgaria. Accustomed for generations before they left Circassia to a perpetual warfare with the Cossacks, they had never settled down as cultivators of the land in Bulgaria, and were little more than brigands. From this foreign element and other similar sources were drawn the irregular troops of the Sultan, the Bashi-Bazouks, or wearers of the red fez; and to bands of these men arms were distributed to enable them to put down the rising among the Bulgarians. The result was what might have been expected. The troops gained an

easy victory, "and abused it most shamefully, the innocent being made to suffer for the guilty in a manner too horrible to think of." A fertile province was laid waste, fifty-four Bulgarian villages were destroyed, crowds of unarmed and inoffensive men, women, and children were massacred in cold blood. The total number of Bulgarians killed was 3,649, of whom 1,907 were women and children. Horrible tortures were in many instances inflicted, women were violated, and large numbers of girls and children carried off and sold as slaves. The detailed and accurate report of Mr. Stoney, forwarded by Mr. Layard to the British Foreign Office in 1877, shows that during the disturbances only forty-six Turkish men were killed, only six Turkish villages injured, while not a single Turkish woman or child was harmed by the insurgents.

At the time of the atrocities and long afterwards the number of persons killed was hugely exaggerated. It was stated at every number from ten to forty thousand. Mr. Baring's estimate of the number of Christians put to death was about twelve thousand; whilst he gave the number of Mussulmans killed at 163, of whom twelve were women. Mr. Stoney's figures are unquestionably the most reliable. But the precise number of innocent persons who perished matters very little. On this point Mr. Baring, whose fairness and capacity are admitted by all writers, has justly remarked: "I have always considered the number of persons massacred had very little to do with the actual character of the atrocities, and whether 5,000 persons perished or 15,000, the sanguinary ferocity of those who suppressed the outbreak is not diminished. The

Bashi-Bazouks killed everybody they could lay hands upon.*

It is unnecessary to enter into the details of the Bulgarian atrocities, but a quotation from Mr. Baring's description of the most appalling tragedy of the time, may be cited to show that the extreme action of Mr. Gladstone and other Englishmen was not without cause. It having been reported that some Mussulmans had been killed in the town of Batak, and that the people had risen, Achmet Agha of Dospat was ordered by Azis Pasha to attack the place. On arriving at the town Achmet called upon the inhabitants to give up their arms, and money, and solemnly swore that if they did so, "not a hair of their heads should be touched." But no sooner were these demands complied with than the Bashi-Bazouks set upon the people and slaughtered them like sheep. Of some 1,200 persons who took refuge in the church hardly any escaped. "I visited this valley of the shadow of death," says Mr. Baring, "on the 31st of July, more than two months and a half after the massacre. In the streets at every step lay human remains. Just outside the village I counted more than sixty skulls in a little hollow. From the remains of female wearing apparel scattered about it is plain that many of the persons here massacred were women. It is to be feared also that some of the richer villagers were subjected to cruel tortures before being put to death. . . . The intention was to exterminate all except those few girls (probably about eighty), whom they carried off to satisfy their lusts."

**Turkey* XV. 1877, p. 119.

If the Bulgarian massacres were not perpetrated by the direct order of the Turkish Government, a point open to doubt, the Sultan and his advisers made no attempt to censure, much less punish, those responsible for the outrages which had horrified the civilised world. Whilst expressing to the Ambassadors of the great Powers regret for what had occurred, the Sultan marked his approbation and appreciation of the conduct of his officers by conferring upon them honours and distinctions. Achmet, Shefket, Azis Pashas, all who had ordered the cruelties, and had personally watched them being carried out, were rewarded, whilst those who had endeavored to protect the Christians from the fury of the Bashi-Bazouks, were passed over with contempt. In his "Lessons in Massacre," Mr. Gladstone says, "The lesson which the Turkish Government has conveyed to its Mahomedan subjects by its conduct since last May in the matter of the Bulgarian rising, cannot be more pithily or more accurately expressed than in the three short English words, 'Do it again.'"

There was a loud and growing demand in England that the Government should give some clear indication of their policy. In its issue of July 15th, 1876, *Punch* drew the Premier as the silent impassive Sphinx, surrounded by an angry and menacing crowd, who with uplifted arms shouted "Speak!" "Speak!" On the previous day, Lord Derby, replying to a deputation at the Foreign Office had said: "No one is more strongly for non-intervention within all reasonable and practical limits than I have been and am, but we must push no doctrine to an extreme, and an absolute declaration of non-intervention under all

circumstances is a declaration of international anarchy, and I need not tell you that international anarchy does not mean either international peace or progress. . . . If, as it has been said, the Turkish Empire is in a state of decay from internal causes—a question upon which I pronounce no opinion—it is clear that merely external assistance would be no remedy. The utmost that can be asked of us is to see fair play. We undertook undoubtedly twenty years ago to guarantee the sick man against murder, but we never undertook to guarantee him against suicide or sudden death.”

Mr. Disraeli a fortnight later stated in the House of Commons: “We have said from the first that we were in favour of non-interference; that we should observe a strict neutrality, if that strict neutrality were observed by others. . . . We did not conceal from the House on a previous occasion that Her Majesty’s Government hesitated much before they adopted the (Andrassy) Note. The reason why they hesitated was this: they were of opinion that the *status quo* in Turkey should, if possible, be maintained. You will find it difficult to maintain the territorial integrity of Turkey without acknowledging the principle of the *status quo*. . . . We never concealed that we had in that part of the world great interests which we must protect and never relinquish, and it was no threat to any particular Power that we said at such a moment that the Mediterranean Fleet, which is the guarantee and the symbol of our authority, should be there, that the world should know whatever might happen, there should be no great change in the distribution of territories in that part

of the world without the knowledge and consent of England.”*

The Turkish outrages in Bulgaria created a profound feeling throughout the Balkan provinces, and, stimulated by Russian intrigue, led to Serbia and Montenegro declaring war against the Sultan early in July, 1876. The struggle was a short one, the result inevitable. Large numbers of Russian volunteers, including many distinguished officers, flocked to the Servian ranks. Both Servians and Montenegrins fought with much gallantry, but they were no match in numbers for the Turkish troops, whose magnificent fighting qualities secured victory after victory for the Sultan, and finally drove back the insurgents into their own territory. A heavy defeat of the Servians at *Saitscha* on August 5th, rendered the invasion and conquest of Serbia imminent. Public opinion was deeply moved in England. The details of the Bulgarian outrages had only recently become known, and there was a strong demand that something should be done to prevent a repetition of those horrors in Serbia. In a despatch to Sir H. Elliot, the British Foreign Secretary, The Earl of Derby, instructed our Ambassador at Constantinople to urge strongly on the Sultan that “any repetition of the outrages committed in Bulgaria” would “prove more disastrous to the Porte than the loss of a battle. The indignation of Europe would become uncontrollable, and interference in a sense hostile to Turkey would inevitably follow.”

This firm and decisive language by Lord Derby, undoubtedly had a good effect. By the end of August

*Speech in the House of Commons July 31st, 1876.

Servia had to beg the mediation of the great Powers, and the course of the victorious Turks was stayed by diplomacy. Futile negotiations followed. On September 4th England supported by the other Powers proposed a formal armistice of not less than a month. To this the Porte objected, and by way of counter-offer announced a suspension of hostilities until September 25th, and notified the terms upon which peace would be granted to Servia. But those terms were held to be inadmissible by the Powers, and were rejected by Servia. On September 24th, the eve of the date for the resumption of hostilities, no terms having been agreed upon, the Porte proposed a continuance of the truce till October 2nd. Prince Milan on behalf of Servia rejected the proposal, and four days later the Servian troops attacked the Turks and the war was resumed. Meanwhile, Lord Derby had been pressing upon the Porte the acceptance of what afterwards became known as the "English Terms," which secured the adhesion of the great Powers. These proposals put briefly were:

(1) The *status quo*, both as regards Bosnia and Montenegro.

(2) That the Porte should simultaneously undertake, in a protocol to be signed with the representatives of the mediating Powers, to grant to Bosnia and Herzegovina administrative autonomy, a system of local institutions which would give the population some control over their own affairs, and guarantees against the exercise of arbitrary authority. There was to be no question of the creation of a tributary state.

(3) Guarantees of a similar kind were also to be

provided against maladministration in Bulgaria, the details to be discussed later.

These terms were rejected by the Porte, in spite of a warning from Sir Henry Elliot that war might ensue with Russia, and that England would observe a strict neutrality.

The rejection of the English Terms was followed by proposals for coercion by Russia, which alarmed the British Cabinet, who again fell back upon a policy of isolation. Sir Henry Elliot was directed "to press upon the Porte" an "armistice of not less than a month," and to state that in the event of a refusal he was to leave Constantinople. To this ultimatum the Sultan replied by a counter proposal of an armistice for six months, which was accepted by Lord Derby, but indignantly rejected by Russia as ruinous to Servia and Montenegro.

It cannot be said that at this stage of the negotiations the British Ministry occupied a very dignified position. An ultimatum had been presented to the Sultan by the British Ambassador, and had been openly and impudently defied. Instead of making good his words, and recalling Sir H. Elliot, Lord Derby had weakly accepted the counter proposal of the Porte, which would have inflicted great hardship upon the insurgent provinces, and now refused to take any further part in the negotiations. The position was a humiliating one for England, and it appeared all the more so by contrast with the effect produced by the action of Russia a few days later. On the 29th of October, 1876, the Servians suffered a crushing defeat, and two days later the Russian Ambassador informed the Porte that if an armistice for six weeks were not accepted within

forty-eight hours, he would leave Constantinople, and diplomatic relations between Russia and Turkey would be broken off. What the British ultimatum failed to obtain, was instantly conceded to Russia, and bloodshed was stopped.

If the Porte had refused to give way, war with Russia would have followed, in which case the British Cabinet had determined not to interpose, unless in the development of events British interests were endangered.

The Russian ultimatum, and renewed proposals made by the Tzar for the coercion of Turkey, aroused suspicion in England as to the real designs of Russia. To our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, Lord Augustus Loftus, the Tzar, while explaining that if the Powers acting in concert did not check the growing disorders in Turkey, Russia was resolved to act alone, went on to pledge "his sacred word of honour, in the most solemn and earnest manner, that he had no intention of acquiring Constantinople, and that if necessity should oblige him to occupy a portion of Bulgaria it would only be provisionally, and until peace and safety of the Christian population were secured." These assurances were received with satisfaction, and a proposal for a European Conference at Constantinople was made by Lord Derby, and accepted. The English Terms of peace which had been rejected by the Porte in September were to form the basis of this Conference, at which Great Britain was represented by Lord Salisbury. It was laid down as a preliminary condition that all the Powers should acknowledge the independence and integrity of Turkey, and should renounce any intention of exclusive influence, or territorial aggrandisement, in the Ottoman Empire.

The day after the announcement of Lord Salisbury's appointment as the British Plenipotentiary at the Conference, the Prime Minister, who had been created Earl of Beaconsfield, speaking at the Guildhall Banquet, explained that during the previous year the Government had sedulously pursued two objects, the first, the maintenance of the general peace of Europe; the second and subsidiary aim, the improvement of the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte. But it was evident that the Ministry had had a third object before them, which they had regarded as more important than the avowed ones, and that was the preservation and integrity of the Turkish Empire. After reviewing the negotiations with the great Powers, the Prime Minister said: "Peace is especially an English policy. She is not an aggressive Power—for there is nothing which she desires. She covets no cities and no provinces. What she wishes is to maintain and to enjoy the unexampled Empire which she has built up, and which it is her pride to remember exists as much upon sympathy as upon force. But, although the policy of England is peace, there is no country so well prepared for war as our own. If she enters into conflict in a righteous cause—and I will not believe that England will go to war except for a righteous cause—if the contest is one which concerns her liberty, her independence, or her Empire, her resources, I feel, are inexhaustible. She is not a country that, when she enters into a campaign, has to ask herself whether she can support a second or a third campaign. She enters into a campaign which she will not terminate till right is done."*

*Lord Beaconsfield at the Guildhall, Nov. 9th, 1876.

This menacing speech undoubtedly produced most unfortunate effects both on the minds of the Tzar and the Sultan. By the Tzar it was regarded as unwarrantable in view of the assurances of mutual confidence that had just passed between himself and Lord Derby. In the words of the Prime Minister the Sultan saw encouragement to resist the demands of the combined Powers, with the certainty that if the worst came to the worst England would stand by him through jealousy of Russian aggrandisement. The following day the Tzar publicly declared that if the Constantinople Conference did not secure for the Christians of the East what right and justice demanded, "Russia will be forced to take up arms, and I count on the support of my people." This declaration was followed by the mobilization of six army corps, which showed that the Tzar meant what he had said. Public opinion in England was now strongly in favour of coercing the Porte, if necessary, to carry out promised reforms. Mr. Cross—the Home Secretary—said "the time has come when what I must call the waste-paper currency—Turkish promises—shall be paid in sterling coin." Sir Stafford Northcote, Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking at Bristol, declared that unless the causes of insurrection in the Balkan provinces were removed, any peace that was made would be a hollow and not a lasting one.

The Constantinople Conference met in December, 1876, and drew up a scheme, founded on the terms laid down by Lord Derby, for conferring administrative autonomy on Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria. It was presented to the representatives of the Sultan as the "irreducible minimum" which would be accepted by Russia, and as "the common work of united

Europe." But from the opening of the "Full Conference," to which the Turkish Plenipotentiaries, headed by Safvet Pasha, were admitted for the first time, it was evident that the Porte had determined to resist the demands of the combined Powers. The "irreducible" report of the Conference was declared by the Turkish Plenipotentiaries to be an attack upon the independence of the Ottoman Empire, and a "Statement of Reasons" as to why such demands had been framed, was asked for. At this moment salvoes of artillery were heard. These, it was explained by Safvet Pasha, were fired in honour of the promulgation of a new Constitution for the Ottoman Empire. "A great act which is at this moment being accomplished, has just changed a form of government which has lasted six hundred years. The Constitution with which his Majesty, the Sultan, has endowed his empire is promulgated. It inaugurates a new era for the happiness and welfare of his people." The brand new constitution which was launched at this critical moment, in this theatrical manner, was not, of course, worth the paper upon which it was written.

Lord Salisbury at the meetings of the Conference, and in his interviews with the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, acted with firmness, moderation, and dignity. But his efforts on behalf of peace and reform were of no avail. The Porte knew that England would not resort to coercion, and believed that when it came to the point she would be forced to abandon a policy of non-intervention for one of active support of the Mohammedan Empire. As the Porte would not accept the scheme of the combined Powers, further meetings were held, and Russia's "irreducible minimum" was reduced. But the new proposals

were rejected with equal firmness, and were declared to be "insulting," and involving "the mutilation of the Empire." The last meeting of the Conference was held on the 20th January, 1877, when Safvet Pasha expatiated on the "excellent intentions of the Ottoman Government." Lord Salisbury in reply pointed out that the Conference had assembled not to record projects of improvements, but "to establish administrative autonomy and effective guarantees"; whereas "the Porte had only given promises and refused to give guarantees." The Conference broke up: the comedy was over; nothing was accomplished. Turkey had baffled, eluded, and defied the combined Powers of Europe, as she had done a score of times before with impunity. Lord Salisbury left Constantinople on the 22nd of January, 1877, and the British Ambassador followed him three days later.

War did not follow immediately. Lord Derby continued to urge upon the Porte the necessity of carrying out promised reforms, and for a time it appeared as though his advice might prevail. The armistice was renewed. Negotiations were resumed by the great Powers, and at the end of March a Protocol was signed in London containing a final appeal to the Sultan. Immediately afterwards Mr. Layard was appointed temporary Ambassador from Great Britain at Constantinople—an appointment which the Sultan construed as a "delicate mark of attention on the part of the English Government." The Protocol was rejected; and Montenegro was warned that hostilities would immediately be resumed. During this time Russia, who had half a million of men under arms, had exercised patience and forbearance. The Tzar was sincerely desirous of not acting alone; but in view of the new refusal

of the Porte to bow to the collective will of Europe, Russia had no alternative but to make good her reiterated determination not to halt until the "principles which had been recognised by the whole of Europe as just, humane, and necessary" had been "carried out, and secured by efficient guarantees." War was declared on the 24th of April, 1877, and on the same day the Russian troops crossed the frontier.

In acknowledging the receipt of the announcement that Russia had resolved to resort to coercion, Lord Derby on behalf of the British Government condemned the action as a breach of the public peace, a contravention of the terms of the Treaty of Paris, and a violation of European law. On the 6th of May the Foreign Secretary addressed a despatch to the Russian Ambassador in which he stated that as long as Turkish interests alone were concerned the Porte would receive no assistance from the British Government. But he added that should the war unfortunately spread, interests might be imperilled which the Government were equally bound and determined to defend. The most prominent of those interests were affirmed to be the "keeping open, uninjured and uninterrupted, the communication between Europe and the East by the Suez Canal." Russia was warned that any attack upon Egypt, even its temporary occupation for purposes of war, would not be regarded with unconcern by England. "The vast importance of Constantinople whether from a military, a political, or a commercial point of view, is too well understood to require explanation. It is therefore scarcely necessary to point out that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to witness with indifference a passing into other hands than those of its present possessors of a capital holding

so peculiar and commanding a position." Lord Derby added that there would be serious objections to any alteration in the arrangements which had been made under European sanction for regulating the navigation of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

A memorable debate followed in the House of Commons on Lord Derby's "charter of English neutrality," as the despatch was termed. Mr. Gladstone as the representative of popular feeling in the country, which had found no adequate expression through the official heads of the Liberal party, moved a series of resolutions. His independent action produced much division among the Liberals, whose nominal leaders had decided not to bring any motion before the House at the time. Mr. Cross declared that Mr. Gladstone had shirked the real question, whether he was prepared to go to war as an ally of Russia against Turkey. That was a question, the Home Secretary urged, Mr. Gladstone did not dare to put plainly either to the House or to the country. There was justice in the taunt, because the question was one upon which much of the policy of the Government had hinged. Mr. Disraeli was not prepared to join Russia in an attack on Turkey. Far from it. He had wished during the progress of the war to join the Turks against the Russians. "If he could, he would have raised Turkestan against the Russians at the same time for the relief of our Indian frontier: measures to that effect were considered, if not arranged. That was what he proposed to do, and would have done it, but for the strong opposition of his colleagues in the Cabinet."*

Into the details of the Russo-Turkish war it is

*Mr. Frederick Greenwood. *Pall Mall Gazette*. Sept. 16th, 1896.

unnecessary to enter. The magnificent defence of Plevna by Osman Pasha, and the gallantry with which the Turks fought, excited no small amount of sympathy in Great Britain. On the fall of Plevna the Porte appealed to the Powers for mediation "in the name of humanity." In reply to the Turkish Minister Lord Derby repeated the warning he had frequently before given that no intervention by Great Britain could be expected.

Numerous communications had passed during the course of the war between the Russian and English Governments, and the exact course the Tzar proposed to follow at the conclusion of the war had been clearly explained to Lord Derby, who had every reason to be satisfied that Russia intended to observe her pledges. But the Cabinet was divided, and the war-party under Lord Beaconsfield was in the ascendant. Rumors that the Russians were marching on Adrianople, and it was believed would advance on Constantinople, brought matters to a crisis. The British fleet was ordered to Constantinople, and notice was given that Parliament would be asked for a vote of credit for six millions. Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon immediately resigned, but after forty-eight hours the former resumed the office of Foreign Secretary. Twenty-four hours after the original order was telegraphed to Admiral Hornby, a second telegram was despatched cancelling the directions, and ordering the fleet back to Besika Bay. On the 31st of January, 1878, an armistice was signed between Russia and Turkey; and a week later a detachment of the British fleet was ordered to Constantinople, not, it was said, "as a menace," but for the "protection of the lives and property of British subjects." The fleet entered the Dardanelles with-

out the permission of the Sultan, and therefore in direct violation of international treaties to which England was a party, providing that no vessels of war should pass the Straits without the express consent of the Porte. That the step did not lead to more serious complications was chiefly due to the exertions of Sir Henry Layard, and to the moderation of Russia, who did not fail, however, to profit by our example in disregarding international treaties.

On the 3rd of March, 1878, a treaty of peace between Russia and Turkey was signed at San Stefano. This was followed by proposals for an international Congress at Berlin, to be attended by the Prime Ministers of the great Powers. In accepting the invitation to attend the Congress, Lord Derby, on behalf of the British Government, stipulated as a preliminary condition "that all questions dealt with in the Treaty of Peace between Russia and Turkey should be considered as subjects to be discussed by the Congress, and that no alteration in the condition of things previously established by Treaty should be acknowledged as valid until it had received the assent of the Powers." To this demand, which was certainly a prudent one, Russia refused to accede. She would only pledge herself to accept "discussion on those portions of the Treaty which affected European interests." The dispute lasted until the 26th of March, when the Russian Ambassador handed in the final reply of his Government in the following terms: "It leaves to the other Powers the liberty of raising such questions at the Congress as they may think it fit to discuss, and reserves to itself the liberty of accepting or not accepting the discussion of these questions." The British Cabinet decided to refuse to enter the Congress, to call out the Reserves,

to bring a contingent of 7,000 Indian troops to Malta, to occupy Cyprus, and possibly also some part of Syria. By these decisive steps Lord Beaconsfield contended that he induced Russia to modify the Treaty of San Stefano, and saved the independence of the Turkish Empire. This was no doubt the case. But the proceedings were strongly resisted by Lord Derby, who, on being overruled, resigned office. He was succeeded as Foreign Secretary by Lord Salisbury.

After two months of further negotiation, a secret agreement was come to between Russia and England. In entering into such an agreement the British Government overcame the difficulties between itself and Russia, and ensured the success of the Berlin Congress before it assembled. But this and other material advantages were obtained at no small sacrifice both of principle and policy. Nor was that all. It had evidently been intended to dupe both the country and Parliament, by creating an impression that the modifications of the San Stefano Treaty had been wrested from Russia by the British Plenipotentiaries during the proceedings of the Congress. If that design existed it was frustrated by the premature disclosure of the terms of the secret agreement through the unprincipled action of a Foreign Office clerk.

In return for the concessions made under the Salisbury-Schouvaloff secret agreement, Russia consented not to oppose the conclusion of a Convention between Turkey and England, which, while fostering the belief that Lord Beaconsfield's astute diplomacy had won for us far more important concessions than had been granted to Russia, sacrificed momentous principles, and was rightly regarded by the friends

of an enlightened political progress as a *damnosa hereditas*. By the Anglo-Turkish Convention Cyprus was ceded to England, who in return pledged herself to support the Sultan "by force of arms" against any attempt Russia might ever make in the future to encroach upon the territories of the Porte in Asia as defined by the "Definite Treaty of Peace." England also undertook, to adopt the words of Mr. Gladstone, "to be responsible for the good government of what is perhaps the worst governed country in the whole world,—the Turkish territory in Asia, from the Dardanelles to the Persian Gulf, from the Mediterranean to the limits of Persia." The bitterness with which the Convention was viewed was not lessened by the important fact that England had been committed to this policy secretly, and without the knowledge and consent of Parliament.

There was another important principle involved in the Anglo-Turkish Convention. From the time of the Crimean War down to 1878, we had consistently protested against the immorality of the designs of Russia for her own aggrandisement. The bogey of Russian aggression, of Russian selfishness, and Russian treachery, was one with which Lord Beaconsfield had successfully inflamed the passions of his countrymen on many occasions. To resist the attempts of Russia to obtain a preponderating political influence in the territories of the Porte, had been the dominant principle of both Liberal and Conservative Ministers. We had taken our stand on a high plane of public morality. It was a position worthy of the political traditions and dignity of the English nation. By a stroke Lord Beaconsfield converted what had been an honest policy into what our enemies might with some show of justice declare to have been

a policy of hypocrisy. England who had maintained the authority of treaties, and had opposed at every turn a barrier to Russian territorial aggression, had wrung from the Porte the cession of Cyprus without the knowledge of the collective European Powers, who, with herself, had solemnly guaranteed that no infringement of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire should be permitted without their assent. The Convention was never submitted to the Berlin Congress, it never received the approval of Europe.

The treaty of San Stefano ceded to Russia the portion of Bessarabia taken from it in 1856, together with Kars, Batoum, and the adjoining territory in Asia. It recognised the independence of Servia, Montenegro, and Roumania, and largely extended the territory of the first two. Bulgaria was constituted an autonomous state, though tributary to the Porte, and was defined so as to extend to the Ægean Sea, and to include the greater part of the country between the Balkans and the coast. Crete, Thessaly, and Epirus were to receive the necessary reforms at the hands of a European commission. As a result of the secret treaty and the proceedings of the Berlin Congress numerous modifications were made. Of these the principal were a reduction of the territory included in Bulgaria, and the division of that state into two parts. Bulgaria north of the Balkans was constituted an autonomous principality; Bulgaria south of the Balkans was made into a province, with the title of Eastern Roumelia, subject to the authority of the Sultan, but with a Christian governor and an autonomous administration. Austria received Bosnia and Herzegovina. The territory ceded to Servia and Montenegro, as well as that ceded to Russia in Asia, was somewhat diminished.

The Porte was advised to make some cession of territory to Greece, and the line of frontier subsequently recommended gave to Greece Janina as well as Thessaly.*

Lord Beaconsfield on his return from the Berlin Congress claimed to have brought back "peace with honour," "such a peace as will satisfy our Sovereign, and add to the fame of our country." The boast was a proud one. But if the Peace reflected honour upon England, it reflected discredit upon much of Lord Beaconsfield's own foreign policy. As long as Lord Derby remained at the Foreign Office there had been a strong division in the cabinet upon the policy to be pursued, with the inevitable result of paralysing effective action in any direction. The policy of the Government was described by Mr. Gladstone as one of "zigzag and see-saw." "It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that we have not one government, but two—one pulling in one direction conformably to the public sentiment, the other, placed nearer the springs of action, constantly turning its course directly to the old sense of virtual assistance to the Turk."†

We may believe that Lord Beaconsfield was as sincerely desirous as Lord Derby to maintain peace. But the amelioration of the condition of the Christian population of Turkey did not appeal to him with the force with which it appealed to Lord Derby, and his other colleagues. To secure effect being given to the reforms promised by the Porte Lord Derby was prepared, in conjunction with the other Powers, to coerce the Sultan, even if coercion en-

**Encyclopædia Britannica*, IX Edition.

†Mr. Gladstone, Bingley Hall, Birmingham, May 31st, 1877.

dangered the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. But on this point he was entirely at variance with Lord Beaconsfield, who held with Lord Palmerston that it was for the general interest of Europe, and for the special interest of England, that the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire should be maintained.

It was this division of opinion which rendered the policy of England throughout the crisis ineffectual. Mr. Gladstone did not exaggerate when he declared that "not in one instance did we either do a deed, or speak an effectual word, on behalf of liberty." Partly from a well-founded suspicion of Russian motives, chiefly from a determination to maintain the independence of the Sultan, Lord Beaconsfield refused to join with the other Powers in any attempt at coercion. There were two psychological moments it appears to us when this might have been done with safety and great benefit. The one was when the English Terms, which secured the adhesion of all the Powers, were rejected by the Porte, the other was when Lord Derby's ultimatum demanding a month's armistice was delivered to the Sultan. But the possibilities of those golden opportunities were not seized, with the result that Russia took action by herself, and the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, which Lord Beaconsfield had endeavoured to prevent, was speedily brought about. From first to last the Sultan was encouraged by the course of British policy to defy both Great Britain and all the other Powers. While pressing upon him the necessity of carrying out reforms, we simultaneously fostered the belief that if the integrity of the Ottoman Empire were endangered we should intervene by force for its protection.

The Eastern Question produced in Great Britain a bitterness and division in public opinion almost without example. From the day he came out of his semi-retirement as the enthusiastic champion of the oppressed nationalities of the Balkan provinces, Mr. Gladstone regained the confidence of the majority of the nation. It was said with truth that though Mr. Disraeli was in office, Mr. Gladstone was in power. And there can be little doubt that the influence which the Government repeatedly sought to exert on behalf of liberty, and political progress, was a direct result of the pressure of the strong public feeling created by the power of Mr. Gladstone's personality, and the glamour of his matchless eloquence. The nation was almost unanimous in demanding the protection of the Christian subjects of Turkey from massacre and outrage. But it was very far from being unanimous as to the means that should be employed. Lord Hartington, Mr. Forster, and many other prominent members of the Liberal Party, refused to accept Mr. Gladstone's views, which became more extreme in proportion to the opposition they encountered. In a passage which has become historical, he declared "Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely, by carrying off themselves; their zaptiehs and their Mudris, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned." But in spite of vehement denunciations of the Turks and their iniquities, it is very doubtful whether Mr. Gladstone, if he had returned to office in September, would have felt justified in entering on a war against Turkey which might have set Europe in a blaze.

During the fierce controversy that was waged for months a very large proportion of the nation were for mending or ending Turkish rule. They did not shrink from the consequences involved by the policy; many did not fully realise what those consequences were, others lost all sense of perspective and saw events through a distorted vision. Mr. Disraeli had contemptuously ridiculed the earlier reports of the Bulgarian atrocities as "coffee-house babble," and had scoffed at the idea of Turkish torture of Christians on the ground that Oriental people used more primitive and speedy methods to get rid of their enemies. He sneered at Servia's demand for liberty, adding that what Servia wanted was provinces,—a very different thing. On the other side Mr. Freeman, the historian, exclaimed, "Perish the interests of England, and perish her dominion in India," rather than we should "strike one blow on behalf of Turkey." By Mr. Lowe, England's support of the Porte was compared to the conduct of a man who keeps a fierce and bloodthirsty dog to guard his property and interests,—an unworthy aspersion upon British policy. Quixotic ideas on the Eastern Question were not confined to either side.

If there was much that was open to objection in Lord Beaconsfield's views of foreign affairs there was also much that was extraordinarily sagacious; if he delighted to play the role of arbiter in the destinies of nations, he was at the same time inspired by a sincere desire to promote the power and to secure the safety of the great Empire to which he belonged. His remarkable prescience, his astuteness, which made him more than a match for foreign diplomatists, enabled him to realise more clearly than his contem-

poraries the enormous importance of Egypt to England, and the grave danger which would arise from Russian intrigue and aggression to the maintenance of British rule in India, and British influence in the far East. But the Treaty of Berlin was a triumph for Russia not for England. All the influence of English diplomacy had been exerted in vain to maintain the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; and in the partition of territory that took place, we availed ourselves of the opportunity to seize Cyprus. Lord Beaconsfield had declared that Bessarabia must never be given back to Russia, and had quoted with approval the opinion of Lord Palmerston that the clause of the Treaty of Paris under which the territory was ceded was one of "the very greatest importance." But the retrocession of Bessarabia had taken place. The demands of Russia as embodied in the Treaty of San Stefano had been materially reduced, but the reductions in some instances were futile, and in others were made at the expense of the Christian populations groaning under Turkish misrule. Within a few years Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia were re-united into one state. The Balkan forts ceased to be manned by Turkish troops. A great victory had been won for freedom and political progress, but in that victory England had no part. It is not necessary to believe that Russia had been inspired only by motives of humanity, and sympathy with the slavonic races of the Balkans; but as a result of her policy and her action seven millions of people passed from "partial subjection to complete independence;" four millions more came out of "direct enslavement into merely nominal dependence." "Three hundred thousand heroes such as Christendom cannot match, the men of

Montenegro, who for four hundred years had held the sword in the hand, and never had submitted to the insolence of despotic power—those men at last had achieved not only their freedom, but the acknowledgment of their freedom, and took their place among the States of Europe.”* It was not without a show of reason that Mr. Gladstone exultingly maintained that his “bag and baggage” policy, upon which utter scorn had been poured, had become “the law of Europe.”

*Mr. Gladstone at Edinburgh, Nov. 29th, 1879.

CHAPTER XIII.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN.

THERE can be no question that the act of Mr. Disraeli in purchasing in 1875 the shares in the Suez Canal held by the Khedive, was one that directly made for progress. Many critics doubted the wisdom of the step at the time it was taken, but the great weight of public opinion has long ago confirmed the sagacity of the bold and momentous stroke of policy. When the purchase was made the Suez Canal had been opened to commerce for little more than six years. The value of the great channel of communication was rapidly becoming recognised; every month made its importance to British commerce and British influence more clear; three-fourths of the whole tonnage passing through the Canal were British, and the proportion was likely to increase rather than diminish. Of the four hundred thousand original shares in the Suez Canal Company, 177,000 were held by the Khedive. Ismail Pasha, who had succeeded in freeing himself from the direct control of the sultan, had obtained the title of Khedive, and had made himself virtually an independent sovereign, was a man of much energy, administrative ability, and enlightenment. In Egypt he had inaugurated a new era of reform. The administrative system was reorganised, the Customs remodelled, the Post Office established as a branch of the Govern-

ment service. Education was encouraged, and the military schools greatly improved. Railways, telegraphs, lighthouses, and harbour works were carried out at enormous cost. "The funds required for these public works, as well as the actual labour," were "remorselessly extorted from a poverty-stricken population," and there was probably no peasant whose condition was "worse than that of the long-suffering Egyptian fellah." Unfortunately for himself, perhaps not altogether unfortunately for his country, Ismail was no financier. Nor had he been able to cope with the official corruption which existed in every department of the state, and Egypt had been reduced almost to a condition of bankruptcy. French advisers whom Ismail called in had found no solution of the difficulty. It was not to their interests to do so. They hoped to benefit largely by the growing embarrassments of the Khedive.

On the 14th of November, 1875, a despatch reached the British Foreign Office, stating that the Khedive was very desirous of securing the services of two gentlemen to undertake the direction of two branches of the Finance Ministry, the Direction of Receipts, and the Direction of Expenditure. They were not only to be conversant with the ordinary routine of such offices, but were to be acquainted with the "economic studies which govern the development of the resources and riches of a country." To this request the British Government returned a favourable reply. But the needs of the Khedive were pressing. It was essential that he should obtain nearly four millions before the end of the month. He endeavoured without success to raise the sum as a loan, on the security of his Suez Canal shares from a French Syndicate. The Syndicate, which practically meant

the French Government, hoped to acquire the shares outright upon more favourable terms.

Mr. Frederick Greenwood, at that time Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, suddenly learned that the shares were being bargained for. He went immediately to the Foreign Office, and urged upon Lord Derby that the shares should be bought by the British Government, who were unaware of what was going on. To this step, there were, of course, many objections and these had to be combatted. The proposal that the Government should buy shares in a commercial undertaking was without precedent. The Ministry had neither money nor authority which would enable them to act. Parliament was not sitting: and nothing could be done. It must be confessed that Mr. Greenwood's proposal was one that might well have staggered any Cabinet minister. But if the purchase was a daring stroke it was one which for many strong reasons justified bold and independent action. The proposal was brought before the Prime Minister, and in twenty-four hours Mr. Greenwood's suggestion was adopted, and the matter as good as settled. Not a word of what was being done got into the papers, and in a week from the day of its proposal the transaction was completed. When the announcement appeared in *The Times* on the 26th of November it made a great sensation. The public were quick to realise what the purchase meant. Hats went up all over the country, and Mr. Disraeli's reputation went up with them, and did not come down again.

Of Mr. Greenwood's part in this important transaction the world has heard too little. The truth is that but for his foresight and timely action the Suez Canal shares would never have been bought by Great

Britain, but would have passed, and with them the sole control of the canal, into French hands.

To Mr. Gladstone, and nearly all members of the Opposition, it seemed both immoral, and politically false, for England to seek to establish any effective hold over Egypt. Mr. Fawcett, one of the most moderate and independent members of his party speaking at Hackney, declared that "if even a small portion of the consequences which some of its enthusiastic admirers attributed to it were likely to result from the purchase of the shares, he should look upon the proceeding with grave misgiving. Before the transaction had been announced twenty-four hours, the glittering prospect was held out to them of interfering and meddling in the affairs of Egypt, and a protectorate and a suzerainty were talked about. It would be unjust to the Government for a moment to suppose that they meant anything of that kind." Though a forward policy in Egypt had not been publicly avowed, it had been determined upon by Mr. Disraeli. He saw the need of increasing and maintaining our political ascendancy there, if other Powers were to be kept from menacing Egyptian independence. Europe was given to understand that if we were not going to confiscate Egypt, neither would any other Power be permitted to do so; that we were embarking on a policy to obtain some definite securities that Egypt should not pass into other hands, and to protect our highway to India and the East.

Less than a fortnight before the purchase, Lord Hartington, the leader of the Opposition, had said "no one knows better than does Mr. Disraeli that the foreign policy which this country wants, is, as Mr. Bright has recently expressed it, 'not a spirited foreign policy, but a just foreign policy.'" There was

a good deal too much "spirit" in the action of Mr. Disraeli to please his critics. When the House met, Mr. Gladstone took the lead in attacking both the manner of the purchase, and the results of it. In his reply Mr. Disraeli based the defence of his action on political grounds. "If it gave us ten per cent of interest," he said, "and a security as good as the Consols, I do not think an English Minister would be justified in making such an investment; still less if he is obliged to borrow the money for the occasion. I do not recommend it either as a commercial speculation, although I believe that many of those who have looked upon it with little favour will probably be surprised with the pecuniary results of the purchase. I have always, and do now, recommend it to the country as a political transaction, and one which I believe is calculated to strengthen the Empire. That is the spirit in which it has been accepted by the country. They want the Empire to be maintained, to be strengthened, they will not be alarmed even if it be increased, because they think we are getting a great hold and interest in this important portion of Africa, because they believe that it secures to us a highway to our Indian Empire and our other dependencies."*

In these words Mr. Disraeli foreshadowed much that has come to pass. Our ascendancy in Egypt has unquestionably been of great value both directly and indirectly to the Empire; but the benefits we have received are as nothing compared with the benefits we have conferred. Our policy has been "just" as well as "spirited." Our power has not been exercised for selfish ends, but in the interests of humanity and civilisation.

*Mr. Disraeli, House of Commons, Feb. 21st, 1876.

In a not less striking degree time has justified Mr. Disraeli's prediction as to the commercial value of the Suez Canal shares. It is obvious enough now, though it does not appear to have been recognised then, that the very fact of the shares having been purchased by England ensured the success of the Canal, and by a stroke of the pen enormously enhanced the value of the shares. Before the action of Mr. Disraeli the shares in the Suez Canal Company were held by a multitude of private persons in France, with the effete, and bankrupt Khedive at their head. Beyond the ready money value of his shares the Khedive was comparatively indifferent to the Canal and its interests. Whether the cost of maintenance were great or small, whether the dues were reasonable or oppressive, whether the existence of the Canal were secure or in jeopardy, the Khedive cared little, and even if he had cared was practically helpless. But when the greatest political and commercial Power of the world suddenly became the chief proprietor of the Suez Canal, a vast change was made in the position and prospects of the Company. For the future, on commercial as well as political grounds, there could be no one so deeply interested in the prosperity, maintenance, and security of the Canal as Great Britain. The magnitude of the British influence was also a guarantee that a more liberal policy would prevail in the administration of the Canal, and that a reduction would be made in the dues which pressed heavily upon merchants. This was done. The Canal started on a course of commercial prosperity which will only cease when the shipping of the world ceases to grow. The shares began steadily to rise in value. In six years what Mr. Disraeli paid four millions for, was worth eight

and three-quarter millions. To-day the value of the shares is twenty-six and a half millions. Mr. Disraeli might well believe that those who condemned his purchase as a commercial speculation would eventually be surprised by the pecuniary results.

In 1887 the neutrality of the Suez Canal was guaranteed by an Anglo-French Convention. By this agreement, the ships of all nations, including men-of-war, are permitted whether in times of peace or war to pass through the Canal, which is exempt from blockade, fortification, or military occupation of any kind. Both the water-way, and the land for three miles on either side, were declared neutral territory. In 1894 owing to the vast development of traffic it became necessary to increase the width and depth of the Canal. Its capacity was still further augmented by the use of electric lights and luminous buoys, enabling traffic to be carried on at night, and the time required for a ship to pass through the Canal was reduced by half.

The relief from financial embarrassment afforded the Khedive by the sale of his Suez Canal shares was only temporary. A few months later, finding himself unable to meet the demands of his creditors, he suspended payment. Mr. Goschen, M. P., and M. Joubert were sent to Egypt to solve the difficulty. A satisfactory scheme dealing with the many complications into which the country had been plunged, was drawn up; and to ensure the reforms recommended being carried out the Khedive appointed English and French Comptrollers-General, who were entrusted with "the collection of the revenue and the appropriation of it to the purposes settled by the financial scheme." But it was found impossible to restrain the extravagance of the Khedive, and in 1879, with

the consent of the Sultan, he was deposed, and his son Prince Tewfik placed on the throne. The joint control exercised by England and France though it did much for the country was not effective, and Arabi Pasha, aided by the intrigues of Ismail, succeeded in raising a formidable military revolt. The insurgents occupied Alexandria, and proceeded to fortify the port. The English and French fleets were ordered to the spot, but France objected to any intervention, or to the exercise of force to put down the rebellion. In the bombardment and military operations that followed England was left to act alone. A British force under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley inflicted an overwhelming defeat upon Arabi and his forces at Tel-el-Kebir on the 31st of August, 1882, and order was once more restored. The refusal of France to take part in the naval and military operations broke up the Dual control, which was replaced by the British military occupation of Egypt. From this time, in spite of many troubles and difficulties, Egypt has made steady progress. Order, good government, and solvency, have been evolved from chaos. In carrying out this task, which is assuredly one of which Great Britain has cause to be proud, the ablest men of the country have taken part. Among the eminent Englishmen who have devoted their time and abilities to secure the moral, political, and material improvement of Egypt, Lord Dufferin, Lord Northbrook, Lord Cromer (formerly Sir Evelyn Baring), Mr. Goschen, Sir C. Rivers Wilson, Sir Edward Malet, Sir Edgar Vincent, Mr. Justice Scott, Sir Colin Moncrieff, and a score of others might be mentioned, to show with what energy and wisdom British Governments have carried on the great work of reform.

The powers of the Khedive have been greatly restricted, and he may be now regarded as a constitutional ruler, who does little more than sanction the decisions of his Cabinet. Over the financial, internal, and foreign relations of the country, the agents of the British Government practically exercise control. In 1883 a limited measure of self-government was extended to the people. The consent of a General Assembly, based on universal suffrage, is required for all new direct personal or land taxes. A Legislative Council acts as an advisory body to the Government, who, however, are not bound to follow its advice. Many provincial Boards with purely local functions have been established throughout the country, and from many other points of view progress has been secured. By means of dams and irrigation vast areas of waste land have been reclaimed and rendered fertile. The Corvée, or enforced labour system which was as old as the Pyramids, and under which the people were held in a state of brutal degradation, has been abolished. "With it have disappeared the cruel Kurbash, wielded by a truculent police, arbitrary taxation, fraudulent tax-gatherers," shamelessly corrupt officials, venal magistrates, and many other abuses which had existed for centuries. With security and good government, the resources of the country have steadily developed, and though large reductions have been made in the land, salt, and other taxes, the revenue continues to grow, and it is not too much to say that to-day Egyptian finance is on a thoroughly sound basis.

Our occupation of Egypt when the Khedive's Government had been overthrown by the insurrection of the army under Arabi, was "the final outcome of a Mediterranean policy which has been in principle

continuous for a century and a half. The lines laid down on this and all other points by Pitt, Canning, Palmerston, and Beaconsfield—themselves a practical continuation of the policy of former ages—have been, and are still, those upon which modern British Foreign Policy has been built. No change can be made in it without the greatest danger to the country, first of all to its commerce, next to the sustenance of its teeming millions, next to its possessions, and finally to the safety of its own shores.”*

British influence in the Soudan has been only one degree less important than in Egypt. Unfortunately there has not been the same continuity of policy, the same determination of purpose, in dealing with the two countries, with the inevitable result of periods of failure and disaster in the Soudan, instead of an unchequered record of reform and progress.

It was not until 1820 that an attempt was made by the rulers of Egypt to extend their authority over any part of the vast territory of the Soudan. During the following years the frontiers of Egypt were steadily pushed towards the South, and by 1853 the advance had passed beyond Khartoum. Trade followed the flag, and much of the country was opened up and explored by daring adventurers. But in the heart of the Dark Continent “trade” carried with it none of the benefits it confers upon lands under the influence of civilisation. In the Equatorial regions of Africa “trade” practically meant traffic in only two things,—ivory and human beings. Of the two commodities slaves were found to be the more profitable, and a large traffic speedily sprang up. Europeans turned away in disgust from the employment,

* *History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain* by Professor Montagu Burrows, p. 286.

which fell into the hands of Arabs, who left behind them ruin wherever they went. "The atrocities committed by these traders," Captain Speke writes, "are beyond civilised belief." Whole districts were depopulated and laid waste. When Baker first saw the Victoria Nile, in 1864, he found it "a perfect garden, thickly populated, and producing all that man could desire." Eight years later when he returned to the district it had become a wilderness, the population had fled, not a village existed. This was the work of the Khartoum slave-dealers. The accursed trade went on unchecked, because Government officials, Turks and Egyptians, were pecuniarily interested in its maintenance. When the Khedive at length moved, it was not out of pity for the countless sufferers, but out of fear of the growing power of the slave-traders, who headed by Zebehr Rahema threatened to become masters of the whole country.

Among the ambitious dreams of the Khedive Ismail, was the creation in the centre of Africa, of a great province, which in time would give rise to a vast trade, and open up the resources of the interior of the Continent. But all legitimate trade was impossible until slave hunting was put down. Accordingly in 1869 Sir Samuel Baker was appointed Commander of a military expedition for the suppression of the slave-trade, with absolute authority over the country South of Gondokoro. With the inadequate resources at his command, Baker accomplished much of value both for humanity and science. But the task of coping with the Arab slave-dealers was beyond his power. If he stamped out the evil in one district, it sprang up in another. Many men in high office in the Egyptian Government were pecuniarily interested in the "black ivory" traffic, and used their

influence to thwart the efforts of Baker and the policy of the Khedive. After four years of toil Baker had driven the powerful slave-dealers into more remote districts. The traffic had not been stopped, it had hardly been checked; it had only been transferred to other regions, where the authority of the Governor could not make itself felt.

In 1872 Nubar Pasha, the most capable and honest of all the Khedive's Egyptian advisers, met Colonel Gordon at Constantinople. The result of this chance interview was the appointment of Gordon to succeed Sir Samuel Baker, who had resigned his command. The Khedive proposed to give Gordon £10,000 a year: he refused, and accepted £2,000. "My object," he wrote to his sister, "is to show the Khedive and his people that gold and silver idols are not worshipped by all the world." He did not go to the Soudan to "pillage the Egyptians," but to carry out with wonderful courage, resolution, and self-sacrifice, the great mission of freeing and protecting the "poor, miserable creatures" who were the helpless prey of the Arab slave-dealers.

Gordon found the Province of the Equator with only three stations, held by a few Egyptian troops, and almost without organisation. His first object was to remedy this defect. Without an organised government nothing useful could be accomplished. Yacoob Pasha and Raouf Bey with whom he was associated were openly hostile to him. There was no support to be got from any officer of the Government. "The Khedive," he writes, "gave me a Firman as Governor-General of the Equator, and left me to work out the rest. I had to depend on myself entirely." Raouf Bey was got rid of; Gordon took the finances of the Province under his own control; and

by the end of 1874 he had put his system of administration on a sound footing, and had done much to stop slave-hunting. The second year was devoted to establishing a line of fortified posts between Gondokoro and Foweira. A fifty-ton steamer and two other boats were taken up in sections, and put together at Duffi. By 1876 things were generally consolidated, but it was evident that opposition would be made to the advance to Lake Victoria. The King of Unyoro was powerful and hostile. Mtesa, the King of Uganda, declared he would resist any advance of the Egyptians. To meet these difficulties Gordon was without adequate means. Progress to the Victoria Nyanza was checked, and he returned with "the sad conviction that no good could be done in those parts, and that it would have been better had no expedition ever been sent." But he had not given up the task. "I do not like to be beaten," he says in his Diary, "which I am if I retire; and by retiring I do not remedy anything. By staying, I keep my province safe from injustice and cruelty in some degree."

At the end of 1876 Gordon returned to England. He was greatly discouraged by the insuperable difficulties of the task he had undertaken. Chief among these was the presence of Yacoob Pasha at Khartoum. "He had successfully checked slave-driving in his own province, but he could do nothing to stop it in the extensive Soudan district," where Khartoum was the head-quarters of the system at which Yacoob connived. But the Khedive was unwilling Gordon should resign. The enormous value of his work was recognised even by the Pashas of Egypt. Baker's expedition had cost the Egyptian Government over £1,170,000: Gordon had been able to remit sufficient money to Cairo to pay all the expenses of his admin-

istration. Baker was an honourable gentleman; the difference in results is merely an evidence of the difference in the administrative and organising capacity of the two men. Strong pressure was therefore put upon Gordon to go back. His reply was "either give me the Soudan, or I will not go." The Khedive yielded gladly. He did more. "Setting a just value," he wrote to Gordon, "on your honourable character, on your zeal, and on the great services that you have already done me, I have resolved to bring the Soudan, Darfour, and the provinces of the Equator, into one great province, and to place it under you as Governor-General." On February 18th, 1877, Gordon left Cairo to take up his gigantic task. "I go up alone," he wrote, "with an infinite Almighty God to direct and guide me, and am glad to so trust Him as to fear nothing, and, indeed, to feel sure of success."

Considering the scanty means at his command, the work upon which Gordon now entered was, perhaps, one of the greatest and most difficult tasks any man ever undertook. Its solitude and isolation were in themselves enough to daunt the staunchest heart. It was "the sacrifice of a *living* life. To give your life to be taken at once, is one thing; to live a life such as is before me is another and more trying ordeal. I have set my face to the work, and will give my life to it." In carrying out his great work for the redemption of the oppressed and enslaved people for whom he felt so deep a sympathy, Gordon was sustained by a lofty conviction, a simple, and humble faith in an over-ruling Providence, that gave him the heart of a lion, and an energy that never seemed to flag. For three years he traversed in every direction the vast territories under his rule. For months

together he seemed to live on the back of his camel. In the three years 1877-9 he rode 8,500 miles on camels and mules. "Neither the numbers of his enemies, nor the fiercest sun of terrible deserts could check his energy. His presence, multiplied by incessant toil into twenty times the reality, awed the wild tribes into obedience, and for the first time in its history the Soudan" found law and justice united with government. Wherever he went he listened patiently to all petitioners, and rendered justice on the spot. His decisions were a terror to evil-doers, the news of his sympathy with the people groaning under oppression, spread like wildfire through the country, and he was besieged by suppliants to none of whom a deaf ear was ever turned. He was a man who had come to administer righteousness and justice, —to "hold the balance level," as he declared at Khartoum.

In describing the difficulties with which he had to grapple, Gordon says, "I have to contend with many vested interests, with fanaticism, with the abolition of hundreds of Arnauts, Turks, etc. now acting as Bashi-Bazouks, with inefficient governors, with wild independent tribes of Bedouins, and with a large semi-independent province lately under Zebehr, the Black Pasha, at Bahr-el-Gazelle." Among these people, among the Arab slave-dealers, who hated even more than they feared him, Gordon went about unarmed, often almost alone, always without any adequate body-guard. His life was many times in danger, but he always escaped. There was something about the man which over-awed his enemies, and inspired extraordinary confidence and affection in the unfortunate natives. By the end of three years the vast territory under his command had been reduced to

something like order. Many rebellions had been put down; means of communication had been opened up, peace was established. But the slave-trade continued. Night and day Gordon had laboured to make a clean sweep of the dealers in flesh and blood, but it was beyond his power, or the power of any other man under the conditions that then existed. "I declare," he writes in March, 1879, "if I could stop this traffic I would willingly be shot this night. This shows my ardent desire, and yet, strive as I can, I can scarcely see any hope of arresting the evil." Arrested the evil had been, but it was still very far from having been destroyed. He had "cut off the slave-dealers in their strongholds," he had taught the people to love him. That this great work was afterwards undone must always remain a dark blot upon Egyptian and British statesmanship. Political progress in the highest sense of the term had been achieved by Gordon during his rule in the Soudan. But the end had been reached. Under the great strain that so long had been upon him Gordon's health was giving way. The deposition of Ismail, the placing of Tewfik on his father's throne, attempts on the part of the Egyptian Ministry to force upon him a policy of which he disapproved, made Gordon determine to resign, and in 1880 he returned to England.

The new Khedive Tewfik and his ministers cared little about the Soudan: the British Government, now a Liberal one under Mr. Gladstone, cared even less. To them "the Soudan was a region lying so remote from the world of what is called practical politics that it might be safely left to stew in its own juice." Gordon had left the Soudan peaceful and prosperous. But no sooner was his influence removed than the

old causes of unrest began to re-assert themselves. A rebellion which began in 1881 gradually spread over nearly the whole of the vast region. Two things had come to the native tribes,—“a leader to give unity to their efforts, and a knowledge that they were in every way better men and braver soldiers than the race which had so long ill-treated them. The leader who in the interval had arisen to give point and purpose to the hitherto chaotic discontent of the Moham-medan Soudan was no ordinary man. Born of lowly parents in Dongola, Mahomet Achmet, the Nubian carpenter’s son, had gradually succeeded in uniting the long separated nations of the middle Nile into one powerful confederation, whose objects were the expulsion of the Turk, and the cleansing of the creed of Islam from the corruptions of Ottoman ascendancy. To his friends he was a genius, a guide, a Mahdi; to his enemies an impostor, a villain, a fanatic; to history he will be a man who proved his possession of great genius by the creation of an empire out of nothing, and by the triumph of his revolt”* during a long course of years.

The rebellion lead by the Mahdi continued to spread during the years 1882-3. To check it the remnants of the Egyptian army were collected and sent to Khartoum, and under the command of Col. Hicks and half a dozen other English officers, advanced in Sept., 1883, towards Kordofan. “Two months later the entire force, numbering ten thousand men, twenty guns, five hundred horses, five thousand camels, was annihilated.” So complete was the slaughter that for many weeks no details of the disaster were known. The news was received with dismay in Egypt and in England. It was clear that

**Charles George Gordon*, by Col. Sir William Butler.

something would have to be done. British influence on the Nile was threatened, the safety of Egypt was at stake, the garrisons left in the Soudan had to be thought of. Either the Soudan had to be reconquered, or evacuated. Mr. Gladstone and the British Government resolved upon a policy of scuttle. It saved trouble, it was believed to be cheap, it would not disturb the arrangements that had been made for meeting the indebtedness of Egypt. Statesmanship cannot be said to have entered into the decision. Gordon was summoned by telegraph from Brussels to London. The resolve of the Government was told to him by Lord Wolseley, and he attended a meeting of the Cabinet on Jan. 18th, 1884. What transpired is best told in Gordon's own words. The Ministers said:— " 'Did Wolseley tell you our orders?' I said 'Yes.' I said, 'You will not guarantee the future government of the Soudan, and you wish me to go up to evacuate now.' They said, 'Yes,' and it was over." The same evening Gordon started for Khartoum.

At Cairo the Khedive gave Gordon a Firman re-appointing him Governor-General of the Soudan, and defining the objects of his mission with much more care than the British Cabinet had taken. After stating that Gordon was to evacuate the Soudan territories, "to withdraw our troops, civil officials, and such of the inhabitants, together with their belongings, as may wish to leave for Egypt," the Firman went on to say, "after completing the evacuation you will take the necessary steps for establishing an organised government in the different provinces of the Soudan, for the maintenance of order, and the cessation of all disasters and incitement to revolt." These directions involved a great deal more than the

withdrawal of the Europeans and the Egyptian civil element from the Soudan. Were they given with the sanction of the British Government? Speaking in the House of Commons on Feb. 14th Mr. Gladstone said:—"the direct actions and direct functions in which General Gordon is immediately connected with this Government, are, I think, pretty much absorbed in the greater duties of the large mission he has undertaken, under the immediate authority of the Egyptian Government, with the full moral, and political responsibility of the British Government." The Khedive in addressing Baron Malortie, after the appointment of Gordon, said "I could do no more than delegate to Gordon my own power, and make him irresponsible arbiter of the situation. Whatever he does will be well done, whatever arrangements he will make we accepted in advance, whatever combination he may decide upon will be binding for us. . . . He is now the supreme master." It is necessary to quote these statements, because an attempt was afterwards made to defend British Ministers on the ground that Gordon had exceeded his instructions.

Gordon reached Khartoum on Feb. 18th, 1884. He told the people that "he had come again to hold the balance level." "There were to be no more Bashi-Bazouks. He had not brought troops but had come alone. He would not fight with any weapon but justice." During the seven or eight weeks communications remained opened, 2,500 women, children, and employees, were sent across the Nubian desert to Korosko, and arrived, according to Col. Duncan who received them, "in an almost perfect state of comfort." While this work was going forward, and Gordon was carrying out the first part of

his instructions, the British Government took the fatal step of sending a military expedition to Suakim for the relief of the besieged garrison of Tokar.

In an attempt to rescue Tokar and Sinkat the Egyptian troops under Baker Pasha, had been defeated on Feb. 4th with great slaughter by Osman Digna. Attacked upon their vacillating and inconsistent policy the British Government urged that they had not taken any action on behalf of the garrisons in the Eastern Soudan, as to do so might endanger the safety of Gordon, and those he had gone to rescue. But resolutions of censure were pressed by the Opposition, who failed in the House of Commons, but obtained a majority against the Ministry in the House of Lords. There was a strong feeling throughout the country in favour of smashing the Mahdi and holding the Soudan. But the Government would do neither the one thing nor the other. They had sent Gordon to evacuate the Soudan. They had determined upon non-intervention. They had declared that to send British troops to Suakim might endanger Gordon and the garrisons in Khartoum, Darfour, Bahr-el-Gazelle, and Gondokoro. But while they recognised this danger the Government grew alarmed for their own safety. If they were to keep office it seemed necessary to do something in response to the war feeling in the country. The cheapest and most non-committal thing was to send a British expedition to relieve Tokar. A force 4,000 strong, under General Graham, was accordingly sent, and Osman Digna was routed at El-Tel and Tamai, the garrison of Tokar having previously surrendered and joined the rebels. By this step the British Government abandoned their policy of peaceful evacuation. They had entered on the path of

force "just far enough to exasperate the people of the Soudan," but not far enough to be of the slightest practical use. The slaughter of Osman Digna's troops "roused the fury of the Soudanese to fever-pitch. The connection between Gordon's presence at Khartoum and a projected conquest of the country by the English seemed at once apparent." In place of "the hated Turk" "the detested Infidel had come to establish rule over the bands of Islam." "All the hesitation which had before existed in the minds of the Arab tribes about Khartoum instantly disappeared."* On the north and east sides of Khartoum, the sides nearest Suakim, a neutral population had been turned into a hostile one. All chance of a peaceful evacuation of the Soudan was at an end. "The operations round Suakim lasted exactly three weeks. When they began Khartoum was open on every side; when they ended, the siege had begun."†

Gordon had gone to Khartoum invested with the fullest powers. Whatever arrangements he made were to be accepted in advance, whatever demands he formulated to enable him to carry out his instructions, were to be complied with by the authorities. Under those solemn assurances he had set out upon a mission of great danger and difficulty. But every promise that had been given him was broken. Instead of "unlimited trust" being placed in his judgment, his advice was systematically ignored, his demands were in every case rejected. Many causes contributed to these results. The British Cabinet was divided; the Egyptian Ministry was divided; Sir Evelyn Baring, who had been entrusted with the duty of placing the finances of Egypt upon a satisfactory

* *Life of Gordon*, by Colonel Sir William Butler.

† *Ibid.*

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basis and keeping them there, was opposed to any policy that would increase the difficulties with which he had to grapple. He was perhaps the most potent factor in the situation. He knew his own mind; there was no vacillation in his policy. It was one of almost persistent hostility to Gordon. But we do not consider that it is just that Sir Evelyn Baring should be called upon to answer for the disasters that followed. Important as was the position he occupied, he was only a subordinate. His views might be right or wrong; but they could have no effect without the sanction of the British Cabinet. To make a scapegoat of Sir Evelyn in order to shield his superiors, is as unjust as it is ridiculous. Carried to its logical conclusion such a proceeding would destroy the responsibility of any government for a definite policy, and enable it to shift the blame on to the shoulders of its subordinates. The men responsible for the disasters in the Soudan, for the abandonment and death of Gordon, were the members of the British Cabinet, and unless the highest positions under the Crown are to be divorced from responsibility, unless those who control the destinies of the Empire are to wield power without being held answerable for their use of it, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, and Lord Hartington, will be arraigned at the bar of history to receive whatever judgment a dispassionate posterity may pronounce upon them.

Mr. Hake in his introduction to "Gordon's Journals" has drawn up a powerful and unanswerable indictment of the treatment of Gordon after he reached Khartoum. Twelve specific demands were made by Gordon, and they were one and all rejected or ignored. (1) He asked for permission to visit the

Mahdi. Sir Evelyn Baring in the name of the British Government forbade him to do so. (2) He proposed as the best means of fulfilling his mission to go to the Bahr-el-Gazelle and Equatorial Provinces. Sanction to proceed beyond Khartoum was refused. (3) He asked that 3,000 Turkish troops, in British pay, should be sent to Suakim. On the advice of Sir Evelyn Baring the British Government refused the request. (4) Convinced that some government was essential for the safety of the Soudan, and the rescue of its garrisons, he asked that Zebehr Pasha should be sent to him and appointed Governor-General. Zebehr was an Arab well known to all the peoples of the Soudan, and possessed great influence over them. The request for his aid was repeated a score of times during ten months. But the British Government refused to allow the Khedive to make the appointment. (5) Gordon asked for a Firman which asserted a moral control and suzerainty over the Soudan. This was peremptorily refused. (6) He requested that Indian Moslem troops should be sent to Wady Halfa. Refused. (7) He asked for 100 British troops to be sent to Assouan or to Wady Halfa. Refused. (8) He urged that the power of the Mahdi must be broken. The British Government declined to countenance such a policy. (9) All these requests having been refused, Gordon warned the Government that if his demand to have the Berber-Suakim route kept open by Moslem troops were not acted upon, he felt convinced he would be caught in Khartoum. In reply Sir Evelyn Baring advised Gordon "to reconsider the whole question carefully," and then to state what he recommended! (10) In reply Gordon telegraphed "the combination of Zebehr and myself is an absolute necessity for suc-

cess. To do any good we must be together and that without delay." The combination was urged by Sir Evelyn Baring, who informed the Government that he believed Zebehr might "be made a bulwark against the approach of the Mahdi." Refused. (11) Baring informed Lord Granville that Gordon "had on several occasions" pressed for 200 British troops to be sent to Wady Halfa, and advised that the request should be refused. (12) Gordon desired a British diversion at Berber, Baring replied that there was no intention of sending a force there.

While the British Government and their advisers were wasting the precious weeks in writing futile telegrams the Mahdi and his Emirs had been busy. A policy of action was opposed to a policy of words. Khartoum was being hemmed in. Berber was captured early in April. The telegraph lines were cut, Khartoum was surrounded, and one of the most memorable sieges in history began. It lasted from April, 1884, to the 26th of January, 1885, 319 days, or only seven days less than the Siege of Sebastopol. During the first five months the British Government did nothing. Eventually they sent an expedition under the Command of Lord Wolseley to rescue Gordon, and secure the retreat of "the Khartoum garrison, and of such of the civil employees of Khartoum, together with their families, as may wish to return to Egypt." That was all that was to be done. The other garrisons were to be abandoned to their fate: the Soudan was to be left to work out its own salvation. Gordon indignantly repudiated the suggestion that the expedition was being sent to rescue him. England had felt that she was bound in honour to save the garrisons. Gordon had attempted the task and had failed. The expedition

under Lord Wolseley was a second effort to fulfil the obligation. To relieve Khartoum and ignore the other garrisons was "a disgrace."

It is not necessary to describe the heroic defence of Khartoum. The details are known wherever the English language is spoken. We may say with Sir W. Butler, there may be sadder pages in our history, but we have not read them. The end came on January 26th; the advance column of Lord Wolseley's force reached Khartoum on January 28th. It was the most dramatic setting of the fateful words, "Too Late," the world had ever witnessed. Among the last words Gordon wrote were these two memorable sentences:— "Like Lawrence, I have *tried* to do my duty": "I have done the best for the honour of our country." "Thus fell in dark hour of defeat a man as unselfish as Sidney, of courage as dauntless as Wolfe, of honour stainless as Outram, of sympathy wide reaching as Drummond, of honesty straightforward as Napier, of faith as steadfast as More. Doubtful indeed is it if anywhere in the past we shall find figure of knight or soldier to equal him, for sometimes it is the sword of death that gives to life its real knighthood, and too often the soldier's end is unworthy of his knightly life; but with Gordon the harmony of life and death was complete, and the closing scenes seem to move to their fulfilment in solemn hush, as though an unseen power watched over the sequence of their sorrow."*

When the news of the tragedy, which was the direct result of their policy and procrastination, reached the British Government they were dismayed. Mr. Gladstone passed from one extreme to the other;

**Life of Gordon* by Sir William Butler.

from non-intervention to a policy of conquest. The Mahdi was to be overthrown, Osman Digna crushed, a railway constructed from Suakim to Berber, the Soudan re-occupied. But nothing came of these high sounding protestations. Sir Stafford Northcote expressed the feeling of the nation, and of Gordon, in urging that unless we were prepared to recognise our responsibility for Egypt, and permanently to hold and govern the Soudan when it was reconquered, war against the Mahdi and his hordes would be a crime of the first magnitude. In the House of Commons the Government escaped defeat by the narrow majority of fourteen, 590 members taking part in the division: in the Lords a motion against the Ministry was carried.

The great work which Gordon had accomplished in the organisation and administration of the Soudan was undone. Slavery went on unchecked. The Nile was closed against commerce and civilisation. Egyptian rule was uprooted—at least one good result,—the power of the Khedive was extinguished, his garrisons massacred, and the vast region whose “conquest and possession cost so much life and treasure lapsed back into its original darkness.”

Gordon had repeatedly urged that the conquest and retention of the Soudan were essential to the Government of Egypt; that if the Soudan were abandoned to the Mahdi or the Turk, the cost financially would be greater to Egypt, through having a conquering and aggressive Mohammedan power close to her frontier, than the maintenance of authority over the provinces of the interior. Events justified these views. Between 1885 and 1896 Egypt was never free from the dread of the Mahdi. Nominally she was at peace, practically she was always at war.

Troops of Dervish raiders hung upon her frontiers. Here and there the enemy were attacked and defeated: but the danger remained. In 1885 by the battle of Ginnis the Mahdists had been driven back beyond the third Cataract of the Nile. Three years of raid and counter-raid followed. Osman Digna besieged Suakim and nearly captured it. He was put to rout by Sir Francis Grenfell. In 1889 the great Emir, Wad-en-Nejumi, the conqueror of Hicks, the captor of Khartoum, advanced with a large force against Egypt. At Argin he was repulsed by Col. Wodehouse. "Nejumi pushed on southward, certain of death, certain of Paradise. At Toski Grenfell brought him to battle with the flower of the Egyptian Army. At the end of the day Nejumi was dead and his army was beginning to die of thirst in the desert."* In 1891 another expedition had to be sent against Osman Digna, whose forces were scattered by Col. Holled-Smith at Afafit. But nothing short of the reconquest of the Soudan could bring rest and security to Egypt, and finally it was determined to undertake the task. Out of the fragments that remained of the old Turco-Egyptian Army, and out of the raw and not very promising native material, British officers had for years been working to create an efficient and capable fighting force. In the face of great difficulties they succeeded. An army of some 18,000 men, thoroughly drilled, and equipped, commanded by over 140 British officers, was ready to take the field. The work accomplished by Sir Evelyn Wood, Sir Francis Grenfell, and General Kitchener is justly described by Mr. Steevens as one of the highest achievements of our race. In 1897 the campaign was begun. Its thrilling details are still fresh in all

* *With Kitchener to Khartoum* by G. W. Steevens.

minds and need not be recited. From the first day to the end it was a brilliant triumph for the army led by General Kitchener. The battles of Atbara and Omdurman broke the power of the second Mahdi who had arisen. Success in each was complete and crushing. The Khalifa escaped and made his way to the south-westward, where after a time he succeeded in gathering together the remnant of his shattered forces. A final effort was made at the beginning of 1900 to recover his old prestige. He was met by Sir Francis Wingate and the whole force annihilated. The Mahdi himself was slain, and of all his chiefs, Osman Digna alone escaped, only to be captured some weeks later.

The Soudan has been reconquered. It remains for us to justify our action by bringing peace and protection to the native races. Slavery has been put down for ever. That in itself is a great event in the history of the political progress of these ancient and historic lands, where the slave hunter had held sway, and where oppression and violence had devastated the unfortunate populations for centuries. But many years must elapse before the Soudan can be brought back to the state of prosperity in which Gordon left it in 1880. The misrule of Raouf Pasha, the rising under the Mahdi, the sixteen years that followed of lawlessness and turbulence, had depopulated the Soudan, and destroyed every vestige of prosperity. "It will recover," writes Mr. Steevens, "with time, no doubt. Only, meanwhile it will want some tending. . . . The Soudan must be ruled by military law strong enough to be feared, administered by British officers just enough to be respected. It must not be expected it will pay until many years have passed. . . . The Soudan will improve: it will never be an Egypt, but it will pay its way. But, before all things, it must be given time to repopulate itself."

CHAPTER XIV.

INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

THE passage of the Dardanelles by the British fleet, without the consent of the Sultan, the bringing of Indian troops to Malta, the calling out of the Reserves, and the active military preparations in India, these and the other steps taken by Lord Beaconsfield in 1878 to overawe Russia, led to unexpected consequences. Had the Berlin Congress failed, war between England and Russia would have followed. That it did not fail, and that the peace of Europe was preserved, were due to Lord Beaconsfield. We may not approve of some of the means by which the Prime Minister gained his ends, but the ends were achieved, and were of the utmost importance.

From the beginning of the century those responsible for the government of India had recognised that the steady advance of Russia in Central Asia constituted a grave danger to British supremacy. It was not only the possibility of a Russian invasion of India with which British statesmen had to concern themselves. That was a calamity which might occur, but it was one that belonged to the remote future. But if that calamity were to be guarded against, it was of the first importance that our moral and political ascendancy should be maintained over the people inhabiting the country that lay between our own

possessions and those of Russia. Might appeals much more forcibly than right to the Oriental mind. By centuries of suffering and experience Eastern peoples have learnt that the rule of an all powerful despot is better than the government of more benign princes who are unable to protect themselves and their subjects from attack. If the Afghans and the border tribes had to choose between alliance with England, or alliance with Russia, they would invariably throw in their lot with the power that appeared to them the stronger. It was, therefore, of vital importance that British prestige should not be lowered among the peoples on the North West frontier of India. To counteract Russian influence, to reimpress upon the native mind the fact that if Russia was strong, England was even more powerful, had been the object of many of our wisest statesmen in India.

It was with these objects that we invaded Afghanistan in 1838, deposed Dost Mohammed, set up Shah Shuja on his throne, and maintained at great cost an army of occupation, until in November, 1841, owing to a series of deplorable errors, our entire garrison was massacred during the appalling retreat from Cabul to Jellalabad. Of the 16,500 souls who started on that fateful march not two hundred escaped alive. Lady Sale, Lady Macnaghten, and about 120 others remained in the hands of Akbar Khan, who was at the head of the revolt. One man, Dr. Brydon, the remnant of the army, survived to carry the terrible tidings to the dismayed garrison at Jellalabad. It had never been intended permanently to occupy the country. Lord Auckland had proclaimed that when the Ameer's power was secured, and

the independence and integrity of Afghanistan established, the British Army would be withdrawn.

Lord Ellenborough who succeeded Lord Auckland as Governor-General of India, in February 1842, reversed the policy of his predecessor. But it was first necessary to relieve Jellalabad, and rescue the prisoners who remained in the hands of Akbar Khan. This was successfully done, and the army was then withdrawn. Dost Mohammed returned to his country and his throne from which he had unjustly and unwisely been driven. In a Proclamation issued in October, 1842, Lord Ellenborough stated that the army in possession of Afghanistan would be withdrawn, and it would be left "to the Afghans themselves to create a government amidst the anarchy which is the consequence of their crimes. Content with the limits nature appears to have assigned to its empire, the Government of India will devote all its efforts to the establishment and maintenance of general peace, and to the protection of the sovereigns and chiefs, its allies." The Proclamation professed to explain the policy by which the Indian authorities would in future be guided. But political necessity is stronger than an artificial morality founded upon lofty sentiments divorced from practical facts. The ink with which Lord Ellenborough wrote his declaration of non-intervention in the future, was scarcely dry, when he declared war against Sinde, which was under the protection of Afghanistan. "We have no right," wrote Sir Charles Napier, who led the conquering army, "to seize Sinde, yet we shall do so, and a very advantageous, useful, and humane piece of rascality it will be." That is a refreshingly frank sentence, worth a dozen high sounding proclamations.

After the battle of Miani which made him master of the country, Sir Charles Napier telegraphed to the Governor-General the word: *Peccavi*—I have sinned, (Sinde). The same year Lord Ellenborough declared war against Gwalior, which became part of the Indian Empire. From 1846 to 1849 we were engaged in the conquest of the Punjab.

Neither Lord Dalhousie nor Lord Lawrence found it possible to pursue a policy of non-intervention. In 1855 the preliminaries of a treaty with Dost Mohammed were agreed to, and the treaty was finally ratified by Lord Lawrence in 1857. By this treaty we guaranteed to respect the Ameer's possessions in Afghanistan, and never to interfere with them; while Dost Mohammed engaged similarly to respect British territory, "and to be the friend of our friend, the enemy of our enemies." This policy not only did much to heal "the wounds left open from the first Afghan War, but it relieved England of a great anxiety," at the time of the Mutiny. The Ameer held to his engagement with us during those troublous days, "when, had he turned against us, we should assuredly have lost the Punjab."

When the rule of India passed from the East India Company to the Crown, frontier difficulties did not cease. During the short time that Lord Elgin lived to carry on the government, an expedition had to be sent against the Wahabis, a tribe of fanatic Mohammedans to the west of the Indus, amid the fastnesses of the outlying spurs of the Hindu Kush. At the beginning of 1864 Sir John Lawrence became Governor-General. He was a strong supporter of the policy of non-intervention; but one of his first acts was to declare war against Bhutan, a wild, unsettled

country lying amid the Himalayas to the north of Assam and Bengal. The Bhutias were conquered, the eighteen mountain passes leading from Bengal and Assam, and a considerable strip of desirable territory, were annexed to the British possessions.

Afghanistan had in the meantime been plunged into civil war by the death of Dost Mohammed, who, leaving sixteen sons, appointed the third, Shere Ali, as his successor. This was in 1863. For five years the country was torn by civil war. Shere Ali's accession was opposed by four of his brothers, headed by Ufzul, the eldest, and his son Abdur-Rahman, a young man of remarkable ability. The conflict was a fierce and bloody one, and the result was long doubtful. Shere Ali asked for the assistance of the British Government. It was refused. Sir John Lawrence even carried his policy of non-intervention so far as to write during the progress of the struggle, friendly letters of congratulation to whichever brother happened through a temporary advantage to gain possession of Cabul, Candahar, or Herat. When, in September, 1868, Shere Ali established himself upon the throne it can be imagined that he felt little gratitude to the British. While the struggle had been doubtful we held aloof. Now that it was evident Shere Ali would win we aided him with money and arms. We had acted strictly within our obligations, but the impression left upon the mind of the Ameer was not a pleasant one.

In 1869 Lord Mayo who had become Viceroy, met Shere Ali at Umbala. The Ameer was anxious to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with Great Britain. He pressed his request with great energy. It was refused by Lord Mayo, who declared

that although the Government of India declined to enter into any definite engagement, they would, whenever they "deemed it desirable to do so," give the Ameer moral support, and might be willing to assist him with money, arms, and ammunition. It was not to be expected after his previous experience, and the experience of his father, that Shere Ali would attach much value to such promises. He was deeply disappointed; and repulsed by England he began to intrigue with Russia.

During the previous twenty years Russia had been steadily increasing her ascendancy in Central Asia, and advancing nearer India. Her goal to-day had proved her starting post on the morrow. In 1864 Prince Gortschakoff had stated that Russia would not advance beyond Chimkent. But the following year saw the forward movement again in progress. Bokhara became a feudatory of the Tzar, Samarkand was occupied in 1868, Khiva was conquered in 1873. Thus, since the Crimean War, Russia had advanced 600 miles towards India. The events of 1868 in Central Asia aroused the attention of English authorities, and after persistent negotiation, in which Russia sought to have Afghanistan declared outside the pale of British influence, a neutral zone was agreed to in 1873 between the possessions, or spheres of influence, of England and Russia. Russia bound herself not to seek political supremacy over the Ameer, and not to send any mission or agents to Cabul. The position of Shere Ali, as was afterwards said by Lord Lytton, was that of an earthen pipkin between two iron pots. Concussion with either would shatter him. He renewed his request for a definite undertaking that the British Government would sup-

port him against Russian aggression. It was refused.

On the tragic death of Lord Mayo, who was stabbed by a convict while inspecting a convict settlement, in February, 1872, Lord Northbrook became Governor-General. The capture of Khiva by the Russians again alarmed the Ameer, who sent an envoy to the Viceroy asking if Afghanistan could depend upon British support in the event of a Russian invasion. In reply Lord Northbrook assured the Ameer that he had nothing to fear from Russia, and that if he always followed the advice of the Indian Government, and gave no cause of offence to Russia, the British would be prepared to aid him with money, supplies, and troops when the necessity arose. By Shere Ali this conditional promise was estimated at its proper value. Repulsed by England, he was driven into the arms of Russia for protection. Shortly afterwards the British Government in order to obtain early information of Russian movements in Asia, urged that the Ameer should be asked to receive a British agent at Cabul. Lord Northbrook, who thought Russia was not likely to menace our North West frontier, refused to be a party to any attempt to force a British Embassy upon Afghanistan. The Ameer it is admitted had always objected to the presence of a British Envoy at his capital; and after the repulse of his friendly overtures by the Indian Government, he naturally objected more strongly than ever.

Lord Northbrook resigned, and was succeeded by Lord Lytton. The British demands became more pressing. Events in Europe threatened to lead to a war between England and Russia. If war broke out the policy of the British Government involved using

Afghanistan as a base of hostile operations against the Tzar. An offensive and defensive alliance with the Ameer was required. Such an object was not openly avowed; but it was the end sought to be obtained by sending a mission to Cabul. To discuss the demands of the Viceroy a meeting was arranged in January, 1877, between Sir Lewis Pelly and Saiyad Nur Mahommed, at Peshawar. Shere Ali's most trusted Minister declared that the location of British officers at Cabul, or in any other part of Afghanistan, was an impossibility: but the British demand was not withdrawn.

The probability of war with England, and the violation of our international undertakings with regard to the Dardanelles, afforded Russia an excuse for ignoring her pledge not to send any mission to Cabul, or to interfere with British influence in Afghanistan. A letter was sent to Shere Ali, on behalf of the Tzar, by General Kauffmann demanding that a mission should be received at Cabul, and that the Imperial Envoy should be welcomed with all the honours of an Ambassador. In this demand Shere Ali and his advisers saw the fulfilment of their fears and their hopes; their fears of Russian aggression, their hopes of an alliance with Russia now that England had refused to guarantee the integrity of their territories. On the other hand the Ameer had not striven to bring about the Russian mission to Cabul. The Russian demand was the direct result of the foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government.

The day before he reached Cabul, Stolietoff was informed by a despatch from Kauffmann that the Treaty of Berlin had been signed. Kauffmann added, "if the news be true, it is indeed melancholy,"

and that "the envoy in his negotiations with the Ameer had better refrain from arranging any distinct measures, or making any positive promises, and 'not go generally as far as would have been advisable if war with England had been threatened.' "* Shere Ali believed that he was about to secure the support of Russia. His mind was not disabused by Stolietoff, who in guarded words advised him to refuse a new demand made by the Viceroy of India that a British mission should at once be received at Cabul. Delays occurred, and the British mission was repulsed at the frontier. The British Government considered further diplomatic expedients futile, and that the Ameer had deprived himself of "all claim upon our further forbearance." War was declared.

The campaign was of short duration. Shere Ali fled into Russian Turkistan, where he soon afterwards died. His son Yakoob Khan was recognised as Ameer. By the Treaty of Gandamak concluded with him a more scientific frontier was ceded to England; the Ameer agreed to receive a British Representative at Cabul, and to follow the advice of the British Government in his relations with other States. In return he was to receive a subsidy of £60,000 a year, and was guaranteed the support of Great Britain against any foreign enemy. The Treaty was signed on the 25th of May, 1879, and Sir Louis Cavagnari took up his position as the first Resident at Cabul. On the 3rd of September a revolt broke out in the city, and the British Envoy and nearly all his suite were massacred. Another British expedition under the command of General Roberts followed, and after severe fighting re-occupied Cabul.

**Forty-One Years in India* by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar, Vol. II, p. 111.

A time of great anxiety followed. The British force was only seven thousand strong, with twenty guns. An attempt to advance upon Ghazni was defeated. The wild tribesmen, magnificent fighters, began to assemble about Cabul. Reinforcements poured in every day. On the 23rd of December, 1879, a fierce attack was made by 30,000 Afghans. The fight was long and stubborn. When it had ended the Afghan force had been repulsed with great slaughter, and scattered in all directions.

Afghanistan continued to be occupied by British troops. In July, 1880, Abdur-Rahman, a grandson of Dost Mohammed, was recognised as Ameer. But peace had not yet been restored. Ayoub Khan, a brother of the deposed Ameer, was in rebellion; and was supported by a large force. Advancing from Herat to Candahar he encountered a brigade under General Burrows, on July 27th. The British force numbered 2,476 men, the Afghan 25,000. Our troops were outflanked, and "completely routed, and had to thank the apathy of the Afghans in not following them up for escaping total annihilation." Of the British troops engaged 934 were killed, and 175 wounded and missing.

The news of the British disaster produced excitement throughout Afghanistan and India. It was of supreme importance that the reverse should be retrieved, and Candahar relieved without delay. General Roberts offered to undertake the task from Cabul, and his offer was accepted. On the 9th of August, at the head of 2,835 European, and 7,165 native troops, he started on a march which is one of the great feats in military history. In twenty days 303 miles were covered, and on the 1st of September Ayoub Khan's

army was routed, and all his guns captured. Six months later all British troops had been withdrawn from Afghanistan, Abdur-Rahman was securely established upon his throne, and a new era began for the country.

In the foregoing pages an endeavour has been made to give an impartial account of the events which led up to the establishment of what practically amounts to a British protectorate over Afghanistan. It will be seen that the policy which formerly guided our statesmen has been completely reversed during the past twenty-two years. It is not surprising that in its earlier stages the policy initiated by Lord Beaconsfield's Government should have been denounced with vehemence.

Mr. Gladstone in a powerful indictment of the Government, pointed out that the causes of the Afghan War lay in the reversal of a policy which had received the sanction of a number of successive Viceroy's from Lord Ellenborough to Lord Mayo, who had laid it down as a fundamental principle that we were to leave the Afghan people and the Hill tribes of the North West frontier in undisputed possession of their territories. "What had been the conduct of the Government to the late Ameer, Shere Ali? We were bound to him by the treaty made in 1857 by Sir John Lawrence, and our obligation had been recognised by every Viceroy down to Lord Northbrook, not to force upon him the reception of British Envoys of European birth." It had been asserted that we had made war upon the Ameer because he "received the Russian Mission at Cabul with great pomp." "Why did he receive the Russian Mission? Because the Russian Government, as a measure of hostility to us,

sent word to the Ameer that he must receive their Embassy. It was impossible for the Ameer to resist. He received that Embassy under compulsion, and therefore he did no wrong. But supposing he had done wrong, which was the greater offender—the feeble Ameer who received the Embassy of Russia because he could not help it, or the great white Tzar, the Emperor of all the Russias, who forced him to receive that Embassy? And what was our conduct? We had heard much about a vigorous foreign policy, and a spirited foreign policy. A meaner act, a shabbier act, a more dastardly act, is not to be found upon record than that by which this Government, forbearing to punish Russia, forbearing even to remonstrate with Russia—that is to say, accepting from Russia the most feeble and transparent excuses with an ostensible satisfaction, reserved all its force and all its vengeance for the unfortunate Ameer of Afghanistan.”*

Lord Beaconsfield in defending the action of the Government dwelt upon the unsatisfactory condition of our North West frontier. He said: “We have been in possession of this boundary for twenty-eight years. During that period we have been obliged to fit out nineteen considerable expeditions to control its inhabitants, between fifty and sixty guerilla enterprises, and have employed upon these expeditions between 50,000 and 60,000 of Her Majesty’s troops. . . . Remembering the possibility of some Power equal to our own attacking us in that part of the world, and remembering also that some ten years ago that Power was 2,000 miles distant from our boun-

*Mr. Gladstone at Glasgow, Dec. 5th, 1879.

daries, a man might consistently have upheld the arrangement that then existed, and yet might by the force of circumstances, and the lapse of time, be now a sincere supporter of the policy which Her Majesty's Government recommends. . . . It has been said that I stated the object of the war to be the substitution of a scientific for a haphazard frontier. I never said that was the object of the war. I treated it as a possible consequence of the war, which is a very different thing. Our application to the Ameer was, in fact, founded upon the principle of rectifying our frontier without any disturbance of territory whatever. What was our difficulty with regard to Afghanistan ? We could gain no information as to what was going on beyond the mountain ranges. What we wanted, therefore, were eyes to see and ears to hear, and we should have attained our object had the Ameer made to us those concessions which are commonly granted by all civilised States, and which even some Oriental States do not deny us, namely, to have a minister at his capital (a demand which we did not press), and men like our consuls-general at some of his chief towns. That virtually would have been a rectification of our frontier. Eight months ago war was more than probable between this country and Russia, and a word might have precipitated it. When it was found out that war was not to be made, Her Majesty's Government made courteous representations to St. Petersburg, and it was impossible that anything could be more frank and satisfactory than the manner in which they were met. But it is totally impossible for us, after all that has occurred, to leave things as they were. . . . I have received a communication from Lord Napier of Mag-

dala, who says 'Afghanistan, if in the hands of a hostile Power, may at any time deal a fatal blow to our Empire. We cannot remain on the defensive without a ruinous drain on our resources. Our frontier is weak; an advanced position is necessary for our safety.' When I am told that no military authority justifies Her Majesty's Government, I can appeal with confidence to one who, I believe, must rank among the very highest military authorities."*

The extracts from these speeches by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Beaconsfield present the two views taken of our policy at the time. We fear that many of our dealings with Afghanistan are indefensible on the grounds of political morality. Other lines of defence must be sought, and we believe they may be found in the necessity of protecting our Indian Empire, and the results that have followed the extension of our sphere of influence. To those who agree with the Duke of Argyll in thinking that to take precautions against Russian aggression in India is to indulge in "unmanly fears of imaginary dangers," our policy in Afghanistan must appear the reverse of political progress. But the weight of evidence is against them. By our military authorities, and by those who are best fitted by experience, and practical knowledge of the races we govern in India, to form an opinion, Russian aggression, and Russian influence are very far from being regarded as imaginary dangers. In judging this question the magnitude of the issues at stake must not be lost sight of. Another mutiny in India would be a great calamity; the overthrow of British rule there, would endanger the safety of the whole British

*Lord Beaconsfield, House of Lords, December, 10th, 1878.

Empire, and lead to results which might bring disaster and misery upon many hundred millions of innocent people.

Abdur-Rahman has fully justified his choice by the British Government as Ameer of Afghanistan. When he was placed on the throne the Afghans were a collection of wild tribes having little or nothing in common politically, and bound together only by the ties of a common race, speech, and religion. Abdur-Rahman set himself to create a nation out of these elements. His reign has not been without its difficulties, but in spite of these it has been a singularly successful one. He has done much to weld the different tribes together, to create a national spirit, and to fuse the conflicting interests of the clansmen into a common nationality. Great improvements have been made in the administration of the country, lawlessness has been checked, authority strengthened, and aided by experienced Englishmen invited to Cabul to act as his advisers, the Ameer has been able to effect many notable reforms. Under the superintendence of Mr. Salter Payne extensive workshops have been established at Cabul, where almost everything requisite to meet the daily wants of the population is manufactured. "The effect of all this," Mr. Salter Payne says, "upon the future of Afghanistan cannot be overrated. The Ameer never expects any pecuniary profit from these works. His one object is to civilise and refine his fanatical masses. The Afghanistan of thirteen years ago, (1880) when Abdur-Rahman succeeded to the throne, is as totally different from the Afghanistan of to-day, as the Afghanistan of to-day will be different from the

Afghanistan of ten years hence, if the Ameer is spared to rule over it."

During 1884-5 Russian aggression on the frontiers of Afghanistan threatened to lead to serious results. Negotiations were opened, but while they were proceeding the Russian troops, on April 9th, 1885, attacked the Afghans holding Penjdeh, and totally routed them, killing over 500. War between England and Russia seemed inevitable. Mr. Gladstone, who declared that "the open book would not be closed" until the honour of England had been satisfied, asked for a special vote of credit of eleven millions, which was immediately granted by Parliament. At this critical juncture the Ameer, who had gone to meet the Viceroy of India, Lord Dufferin, at Rawul Pindi, withdrew his claim to the Penjdeh district, his right to Zarfikar being recognised in exchange; and the following month Mr. Gladstone was able to announce that all impediments to a friendly correspondence with Russia had been removed.

In 1894 a rearrangement of the frontier between British India and Afghanistan was made with the Ameer by Sir Mortimer Durand. The sphere of British influence was largely increased, and the new frontier obtained was of great importance from a military point of view. The control of all approaches to India on the South-East side of the Pamirs, of all the passes over the Hindu-Kush and Lahori ranges, of all the districts from Chitral to Baluchistan, is now in British hands. In return for the concessions granted us the Ameer was permitted to import arms from India, and the amount of his subsidy was raised from £75,000 to £112,000 a year.

Since the administration of India passed from the

old East India Company to the British Crown, the country has made remarkable progress, both politically and materially. The day is far distant, it may possibly never dawn, when we can apply in our dealings with this great group of Oriental peoples, the methods of self-government which are inseparable from the political and material growth of the Anglo-Saxon race. But does political progress necessarily depend upon the adoption of democratic forms of government? Before the question can be answered, it is necessary to define what is meant by political progress. Is it a means to an end? Or is the end, as some writers appear to suggest, of less importance than the means? Upon the answer to these questions depends the verdict as to whether our policy in Egypt, in Afghanistan, and in India, making due allowance for the mistakes and failures inseparable from human effort, has promoted political progress, or has interposed barriers to its advance. To our mind the answer is obvious. Parliaments, universal suffrage, a free press, government of the people, by the people, for the people, are no doubt the only lines upon which political progress can proceed among the English-speaking peoples, European nations, and other enlightened races. But these institutions, which centuries of experience and effort have proved to be the best adapted to secure the welfare of certain races, are only means to an end. We value the institutions because they secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Should they ever cease to accomplish the great purposes for which they have been devised, they will be numbered among the worn out creeds, the exploded fallacies, the shattered institutions, which civilisation has scattered behind it in

its triumphant march to the realisation of the high ideals towards which humanity steadily presses. It is not institutions we value, it is not democracy we worship; it is the results we obtain from the one through the profound instincts that guide the other. As long as we enjoy the substantial results which political progress has achieved for the world, we need not enter a bigoted protest because, under entirely different circumstances than obtain amongst us, those results are produced elsewhere by methods we have long abandoned, by a system of government we have outgrown, by a denial of political privileges we enjoy as individuals, and have learnt to exercise as a trust. Wherever British rule prevails, or British influence preponderates, the material, if not the sentimental, results of democratic political progress are gradually being extended to the people.

In Imperial as in individual affairs it is dangerous to allow our judgment to be obscured by sentiment. But unfortunately some of the recent rulers of our Indian Empire have not recognised the importance of this simple maxim. They have attempted to extend to the peoples of India, who differ in race, language, religion, and physical characteristics, democratic forms of government which can only be exercised with safety by enlightened nations united by the common ties of blood, speech, creed, and aspiration. The Indian natives have not yet emerged from the condition of ignorance which prevailed among the English peasantry in the Middle Ages. Of the two hundred and eighty-seven millions of peoples we govern in India, only 109 males, and 6 females, out of every thousand, are able to read and write. What this means may be learnt by contrast. The negroes of the United States are enlightened by comparison. Of

that coloured population 245 males and 217 females out of every thousand can read and write: and if we pushed the inquiry further we should discover other important differences, of environment and creed, which would all be in favour of the blacks of the United States.

In the opinion of men who have spent the best years of their lives in India, many of the innovations made by Lord Ripon during the years he was Viceroy, were premature, and have not been conducive to the interests of the country. The extension of the criminal Jurisdiction to Native Civil Servants of the grade of District Magistrates, has remedied no evil, removed no grievance, but created many difficulties. Even more objectionable was the removal of the restrictions which Lord Lytton had placed upon the freedom of the vernacular press. "In India the Native press is an exotic which, under existing conditions, supplies no general want, does nothing to refine, elevate, or instruct the people, and is used by its supporters and promoters—an infinitesimal part of the population—as a means of gaining its selfish ends, and of fostering sedition, and racial and religious animosities. . . . We gain neither credit nor gratitude for our tolerant attitude towards the Native press. Our forbearance is misunderstood; and while the well disposed are amazed at our inaction, the disaffected rejoice at being allowed to promulgate baseless insinuations and misstatements which undermine our authority, and thwart our efforts to gain the goodwill and confidence of the Native population."*

Those who understand the feelings and prejudices of Asiatics, and who from long experience in the East

**Forty-One Years in India*, by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar.

are most competent to form an opinion on the policy that should be applied to the government of India, consider it is a dangerous experiment to attempt to force Western methods of self-government upon races so absolutely different from ourselves in enlightenment, tradition, and customs. Lord Roberts points out that while our position since the Mutiny has been materially strengthened, signs are not wanting that the spirit of unrest and discontent may easily be revived. The introduction of foreign ideas which the natives do not understand, and view with suspicion, needs to be carried on with great caution and circumspection. "The Government of India should, no doubt, be progressive in its policy, and in all things be guided by the immutable principles of right, truth, and justice; but these principles ought to be applied, not necessarily as we should apply them in England, but with due regard to the social peculiarities, and religious prejudices of the people, whom it ought to be our aim to make better and happier."*

The machinery by which we sway the destinies of the 287,000,000 of people under our control in India is very simple. The King-Emperor is represented by the Viceroy, who has associated with him a Legislative Council dealing with all Imperial matters. Local Legislative Councils sit at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Of the first the Viceroy is the Governor-General, the last two are guided by separate Governors aided by Executive Councils. The members of all these Councils are appointed by Government, and are not elected. Under the control of these heads of the Empire there are numerous Lieutenant-Governors,

**Forty-One Years in India*, by Lord Roberts, Vol. I. p. 448.

Chief Commissioners, and Resident and Political Agents, throughout the vast territories. The army has a strength of about a quarter of a million men. Of these some 74,000 are British, and 146,000 Native troops. In addition Native reserves number some 14,000, Volunteers some 26,000, with some 20,000 "contingents from feudatory states, organised and trained by British officers."

In addition to the population over whom we exercise direct rule, there are some three hundred Native States, great and small, who are under the protection of the British Crown. These states are divided into three distinct classes—the allied, the tributary, and the protected. "The allied are provided by the British Government with a regular contingency of subsidiary troops, for which a fixed charge is made. These represent a total population of over twenty-five millions. In the tributary states the Government maintains no regular troops, but undertakes to defend them from any possible attacks from without, receiving in return a regular tribute. Of such states there are about fifty, with some fifteen million inhabitants. The protected states, exempt from tribute, stand in the same relation to the supreme authority, and number upwards of ninety, with a joint population of perhaps twenty-six millions. All three have renounced the right of self-defence, and of independent diplomatic representation abroad, England guaranteeing them from attack, and acting as mediator in all the differences arising among them. The English Government moreover reserves to itself the right of interfering in the internal administration whenever the native rulers become the oppressors, instead of the protectors, of their subjects."*

*Asia by A. H. Keane, Vol. II.

Since the Crown took over the administration of India the country has been in many ways transformed. Over twenty-two thousand miles of railway have been constructed; communication has been opened up by the provision of highways; the country is now intersected by many canals, and covered by a network of telegraph lines. These and other great public works have largely increased the area of land under cultivation, minimised the risk of famine, equalised the prices of agricultural produce, developed a large and lucrative export trade, led to the establishment of many prosperous jute, cotton, sugar, and other factories, the opening of coal mines, and the further development of tea and coffee plantations. The establishment of the system of civil and criminal justice, the assessment of the land tax for long terms of years, the recognition of proprietary right in the land, the founding of schools, universities, medical colleges, and other institutions to encourage primary, secondary, and higher education, and the study of technical and scientific branches of knowledge, have largely contributed to the moral and material prosperity of the people. An attempt has also been begun to extend education to the women of India. Though efforts in this direction have to be made with great caution, and many obstacles have to be overcome, the movement is slowly progressing, and in course of time must be attended with results of great importance. Under our rule the more cruel religious rites which were formerly common have been put down. Suttee among the Hindus has practically ceased to exist, and human sacrifice, and other savage customs among the wild hill tribes have been largely suppressed.

But the two great problems with which the Government has been concerned, since the administration of

India passed under the Crown, are the consolidation and protection of the Empire, and the mitigation of famines. Of these problems the latter presents many difficulties. From time immemorial famine and pestilences that follow times of scarcity have devastated many quarters of the earth. Owing to climate, congestion of population, and religious prejudices, parts of India are particularly liable to these calamities. To prevent famines is impossible; they are the result of causes beyond the control of human agency. But to a limited degree the evils of a prolonged drought can be mitigated, and its disastrous results avoided. To enable them to grapple successfully with the enormous difficulties they are constantly called upon to face, the Government have kept three objects in view:—(1) to increase irrigation, conserve the water supply, and regulate its distribution in districts subject to droughts; (2) to improve means of transport so that large supplies of food may readily be sent from regions of abundance to districts where the crops have failed, and to encourage more efficient methods of agriculture; (3) and in times of famine by means of Government works, and a free distribution of food, to prevent the sacrifice of human life. In all three directions great results have been obtained.

The attention of the authorities to the necessity of taking steps to guard against the calamities that follow drought, was aroused in 1866 by the terrible sufferings of the Natives in the Orissa and Ganjam districts of Bengal. These districts are among the most productive in India. Even at that period they were not isolated and inaccessible; and there would have been little difficulty in supplying the people with an abundance of food. But the district officials were inexperienced, and ignored the warnings they received.

and in May, 1866, Sir John Lawrence suddenly received news that thousands of natives were daily dying from starvation. Over a million persons perished. To add to the horrors of the situation the period of drought was followed by a period of unusually heavy rains, which caused the Mahanadi River to flood a district of over a thousand square miles, driving a million and a quarter of people from their homes.

Sir John Lawrence recognised the magnitude of the evil and the duties of the Government. He warned district officers throughout the country that in future they would be held personally responsible for any loss of life in time of famine, that could have been prevented by foresight and organisation. He established a Department of Irrigation, carried out a number of useful works, and had plans drawn up for the construction of canals, and other means for protecting districts from the consequences of drought or flood, estimated to cost within ten years over thirty millions sterling. In less than five years 1,556 miles of railways were built to establish communication with isolated districts.

The work begun by Sir John Lawrence has been carried on with unremitting zeal ever since. All the skill and resources of Western civilisation have been employed to devise means for preventing, or alleviating the sufferings of the native races. Great engineering works have been carried out for distributing the water of reservoirs, and the surplus water of rivers to tracts which can be artificially irrigated. Many famines have occurred since 1866 but their results have been greatly lessened by the efforts of Government. Two years after the wise precautions for guarding against the evils of famine were established by Sir John Lawrence, a serious disaster was

averted in Oudh through the energy of the district officers, while in the adjoined native states half a million of people perished. In 1873 there was a partial failure of the rice crop in Behar, in North-Western Bengal. The authorities fully alive to their duties took energetic measures. The expenses of the Government amounted to six and a half millions sterling, while private subscriptions yielded £280,000, large donations being received from all parts of the British Empire.

Scarcely had this great work been completed than the Government had to make similar efforts in the Deccan in Southern India, and in 1877 over five millions sterling were spent in public relief works. The famine of 1896-7 in Upper India was one of unprecedented magnitude. But the relief organisation was equal to all demands. The Queen from the beginning of the disaster had taken the warmest interest in the relief of the sufferers. Sympathy was aroused throughout the Empire; a Mansion House Fund was opened by the Lord Mayor of London, and several Native Princes placed large sums of money at the disposal of the Viceroy. Irrigation, railway, and other relief works were started in all the affected districts by the Indian Government. When the Mansion House Relief Fund was closed it amounted to nearly £550,000. Contributions in money, grain and clothing were sent from all parts of the Empire, from the United States and from other countries, the total voluntary subscriptions amounting to £1,750,000.

The last year of the century witnessed another famine equally disastrous. An area embracing a population of sixty-two millions was affected, and the number of persons employed upon relief works at

times was not far short of five millions. In grappling with the task of relieving the distress and suffering caused by this calamity the Indian Government showed great energy; and were nobly aided by the public throughout the Empire. The great demands made by the war in South Africa upon public generosity, did not prevent a practical demonstration of sympathy with the unfortunate sufferers in India. A Relief Fund was opened at the Mansion House, and in response to the appeal of the Lord Mayor £140,000 was subscribed within a month, and further donations continued to be received daily. Speaking at Calcutta on March 28th the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, gave a vivid idea of the sufferings of the people and of the immense losses of agricultural wealth caused by the drought. He thanked the Lord Mayors of London and other towns for the patriotic readiness with which they had inaugurated relief funds, and also the generous British public who had responded so splendidly to the appeal. Further, there were included in India's thanks the British colonies in both hemispheres whose union with the mother country and her great Asiatic dependency, whether for the purpose of conducting the war or alleviating the sufferings of the masses, struck a harmonious resounding note at the dawn of a new century, which would re-echo throughout the world. Referring to the death-rate as a test of the efficiency of famine relief, the Viceroy said the mortality in the stricken provinces of British India was scarcely at all in excess of the normal death-rate.

The consolidation of the power of British rule in India has been a work of great magnitude. Step by step the task has been carried forward until we have built up a united empire, with a scientific and strongly defended frontier, which it would be

dangerous for any Power to attack. The steady advance of Russia in Asia, and the necessity of counteracting Russian influence upon the native mind, have forced British statesmen to undertake in the interest of the welfare of the Empire many arduous tasks which otherwise might have remained outside the bounds of national obligation. With these causes nearly all our Indian wars are more or less closely connected. The Afghan, Beeloch, Sikh, and Gwalior wars, the measures taken after the Mutiny, the annexation of Burma by Lord Dufferin in 1886, the Chitral and many other small wars on the frontier, were all due to the same wise and far-sighted policy, which recognised that if our rule over India is to be an abiding one, it must be not less strong than it is just. With the same object the Government of India has spent upwards of seventy millions sterling in rendering the various passes of the North West frontier impregnable; while the annual expenditure upon frontier fortifications is a heavy drain upon the finances of the country.

In preparing the nation to meet its increasing responsibilities in India few men have accomplished more important work than Lord Roberts, whose services as a member of the Defence Committee led to momentous results. Up to that time greater stress had been placed upon the necessity for constructing numerous fortifications along the frontier, than upon lines of communication. Lord Roberts was the first to insist that it was a matter of vital importance we should possess means of bringing all the strategical points on the frontier into direct communication with the railway system of India, so that troops could be rapidly conveyed wherever needed. He embodied his conclusions in a memorandum, in which he said,

"I would push on our communications with all possible speed; we must have roads, and we must have railways; they cannot be made on short notice, and every rupee spent upon them now will repay us tenfold hereafter. Nothing will tend to secure the safety of the frontier so much as the power of rapidly concentrating troops on any threatened point, and nothing will strengthen our military position more than to open out the country and improve our relations with the frontier tribes. There are no better civilizers than roads and railways; and although some of those recommended to be made may never be required for military purposes, they will be of the greatest assistance to the civil power in the administration of the country."* These recommendations were adopted, and the day is now not far distant when India will be in a thoroughly satisfactory state of defence.

In 1875-6 the Prince of Wales visited India, and was received with an outburst of emotional loyalty that showed "how deep down in the hearts of the people still lay their devotion to the ideal of a feudal sovereignty." The visit was undoubtedly of great importance in bringing home to the minds of the teeming millions of natives we govern, the power and reality of the British Crown. On the 1st of January, 1877, the Queen amidst circumstances of becoming pomp and splendour was proclaimed Empress of India, an event which caused general rejoicing all over the country, in Native States as well as British cantonments. By heredity an Oriental, no one knew better than Lord Beaconsfield how to touch the imagination and stir the feelings of Eastern peoples. He

**Forty-One Years in India* by Lord Roberts.

possessed by intuition the knowledge and insight of native character which is only acquired by Englishmen by years of practical experience and patient observation. It was this fine insight which led him at the time of the Russo-Turkish war to warn the nation that in our dealings with Mohammedan Turkey it would not be wise totally to ignore the feelings and susceptibilities of millions of British subjects in India. This was a point that had been lost sight of, and Lord Beaconsfield's sagacious reminder that we are the greatest Mohammedan Power of the world, came with surprise upon the British masses. The Mohammedans over whom we rule in India, are very far from regarding British policy in Turkey with indifference. The Sultan is looked up to as the legitimate representative of the Prophet, and the Ottoman Empire as the chief seat of their religion. For these and other reasons the Indian Mohammedans were regarded as an element, if not of danger, at least of anxiety, by the central government. Chiefly Sunnis, with an influential Shiah minority, the Indian Mohammedans are concentrated in Bengal, the North-West Provinces, and the Punjab, and numbered in 1891 over 57,000,000, or 19 per cent of the whole population; so that the Emperor of India rules over far more Mussulman subjects than any other sovereign in the East. The Lieutenant-General of Bengal alone "has in his jurisdiction as many millions of Moslems as the Sultan of Turkey, and thrice as many as the Shah of Persia."

The sixtieth anniversary of the Queen's reign was celebrated throughout India by public rejoicings, and demonstrations which evinced the sincerity and loyalty of Native feeling to the great Empress. A gracious message from Her Majesty still further increased the

enthusiasm. At Gwalior the Diamond Jubilee created the greatest rejoicings. The Maharajah announced the remission of 60 lakhs of revenue, and the release of 10 per cent of the prisoners. At Simla the Viceroy received numerous addresses for presentation to the Queen, and in the course of his speech said that Her Majesty's strength all through the sixty years of her reign, had come from her being actuated by two good principles—love of her people, and the conscientious performance of duty. Detachments of Imperial Service troops sent by the native Indian Princes took a conspicuous part in the jubilee festivities in London.

CHAPTER XV.

RUSSIA: JAPAN.

THE century has witnessed a great awakening of intellectual life in Russia. In literature, in the Arts, in politics, movements have sprung up that have already led to important results, and promise to exercise a profound influence upon the future of the country. From a condition of mental stagnation, and an attitude of resignation or stolid indifference to the degraded state of the mass of the people, a large section of the intellectual classes have been aroused by echoes of the trumpet voice of liberty which has resounded throughout the civilised world. Apathy has given place to interest; contentment under a political system of grievous wrong and oppression has been superseded by the unrest, and agitation, which neither the tortures of Russian prisons, nor the terrible sufferings of exile to Siberia, have been able to allay. The instincts of freedom and justice are stronger than despotic governments. Persecution has never yet succeeded in trampling out the higher aspirations of mankind; and when the existence of a government can only be secured against the onslaughts of public opinion by a resort to cruelty and oppression, we may be certain that the day is at hand, and that the long darkness of centuries has begun to roll away.

Political progress in Russia is still only a sentiment

—but it is a powerful and a growing sentiment from which we have much to hope. Under its pressure feudal institutions are tottering to their fall. Their final overthrow will no doubt be a matter of time. A generation, even a century, is but a short period in the life of any nation; it is a shorter period in Russia than in any other country. Throughout the vast domains of the Tzar freedom wages a threefold fight against despotism, ignorance, and superstition. The “Middle Ages,” and all that the phrase implies, still exist in Russia. Between the privileged few and the mass of the people, there is a great gulf, bridged by no intermediate classes able to profit by the efforts of enlightened leaders of thought. The peasant is steeped in ignorance to the very lips; and his ignorance is entrenched behind a wall of gross superstition. He is the product of centuries of oppression and degradation. He regards his wrongs with stolid indifference, or bears them with the resignation of despair. Between the Tzar and the priest on the one hand, the large landowners, the money-lenders, and the Mir, on the other, his existence is so hemmed in as to stifle every aspiration, and paralyse every effort to break the bonds of a degrading environment. In the subdivision of the population 81.6 per cent of the people belong to the peasant order. The nobility represent 1.3 per cent; the military 6.1; the clergy 0.9; the merchants, or trading classes, 9.3; the remainder being unclassified. In other words the middle classes in Russia are as insignificant in number as they are inferior in intelligence when compared with the middle classes of any other great nation, not even excepting the Chinese. It is this fact which renders the task of reform in Russia so difficult, and enables

the Government to resist successfully the demands of the friends of political progress.

A strange spectacle is presented by the movement which began in 1860. A large section, perhaps a majority, of the privileged classes, the educated, wealthy, refined, intellectual section of the nation, demand in the name of the whole people, education, liberty, progress,—deliverance from the terrors of the administrative system which exiles over 2,000 hapless human beings every year to Siberia, crowds the gaols to overflowing with others, and inflicts upon persons guilty of no crime, but that of holding opinions common to every English speaking person throughout the world, the horrors of the knout and solitary imprisonment for life. Every demand for reform, every effort to spread knowledge, every attempt to promote education, every proposal to ameliorate and improve the condition of the masses, is refused, is thwarted, is condemned, is punished by an all-powerful autocratic administrative despotism, wielded under the Tzar by Councils, governors, and a small army of corrupt officials, nearly all of whom are also drawn from the privileged and educated classes. It is a house divided against itself. On the one side is everything that is best and noblest in intellectual Russia; on the other are members of the same classes fighting with grim fierceness and ferocity that at times have sent a thrill of horror throughout civilisation, for the maintenance of selfish privileges, class rights, feudal institutions, and the preservation of an absolute monarchy. And this tremendous force, so potent for oppression, so overwhelming in resource, so ominous to the peace and progress of the whole world, is founded upon the devotion, the loyalty, the superstition, and the ignor-

ance, of tens of millions of peasants, who are still little better than serfs. There was a period in English history when the despotism of government was curbed by the nobles, who wrung from reluctant monarchs concessions for their own order and for the whole people. That was the beginning of the movement which pursued step by step, through long centuries, brought downward to the people justice, prosperity, enlightenment, and finally the control of power. To-day Russia stands on the threshold of revolt against an absolute despotism. She occupies the position which England quitted centuries ago. But there is this important difference between the conditions of the two countries. In England the educated classes were united in the resistance of despotism; in Russia they are divided, and on the side of the monarchy is arrayed an army of administrative officials, whose existence, salaries, and opportunities for peculation, depend upon the maintenance of one of the most stupendous systems of oppression the world has ever seen. These are the conflicting forces now at work in the Russian Empire, and in the long run there can be no doubt on which side victory will lie.

The liberation of the serfs in 1861 was an important step in political progress, not only because it delivered twenty-three millions of people from an oppressive bondage, but because it stimulated the demand for reform, diverted a share of the intellectual movement throughout the country from literature and art into political channels, and was followed by a period of great material and commercial expansion. Serfdom was not an ancient system in Russia. It only sprang up in the sixteenth century, and was established by law in 1609. Even under the best

landlords the yoke of the serfs was a hard one to bear; under the majority of their owners the serfs led a terrible existence. Cruelty and suffering have left their marks upon the Russian peasantry. Their apathy to everything beyond the narrow circle of their own existence, the extraordinary fortitude with which they bear the ills and sorrows of life, are the result of centuries of oppression and degradation. In striking the fetters from a people who have been slaves for generations, we only free them at first in the material sense of the word. The moral force and intellectual strength nurtured by freedom cannot be bestowed upon a class or a race by any instantaneous process. They are the result of generations of hereditary influence, of centuries of independence in thought and action. Thus, while the liberation of the serfs by Alexander II was an enlightened and humane measure, and one which reflects credit and honour upon that liberally disposed ruler, it did not transform, or indeed effect any serious political change in the condition of the Empire. In time the reform must lead to momentous results, but meanwhile in addition to his ignorance, the liberated serf has to overcome other serious disadvantages. Set free in theory, the Russian serf in reality was emancipated from the bondage of the private owner merely to become the victim of the Mir, or communal organisation, which holds the land in trust for the peasants. It was one of the fundamental principles of the Emancipation Act to replace the authority of the private slave-owner by that of the commune. Theoretically the peasants own a large portion of the land of Russia; practically, except in isolated cases where they have acquired their holdings by purchase, they do not own a rood of the soil they till, and are

so circumscribed by the debasing communal system as to be little better off from an economic and political point of view than in the days of serfdom.

A brief description of the system of local self-government that obtains in the chief districts of Russia will throw much light upon this point. Theoretically the local administration is largely in the hands of the people: practically the masses enjoy very little power. The peasantry, says Mr. C. E. Smith, "do not dwell on scattered farms, but are grouped in villages, and each of these villages constitutes a commune, or mir, which is the limit of political organisation. The land held by a village is regarded as belonging to the whole community, and is apportioned among the families according to the number of their working units. The communal assembly is composed of all the householders, who elect one of their number Elder (Starosta), or executive, and consider and decide all communal affairs. The communes are united into volosts, each containing about 2,000 householders. The volost assembly is composed of delegates from the village communes, one for every ten houses, who elect a volost Elder (Starshina), and who have the same powers for the volost which the communal assemblies have for the commune. . . . The volost assemblies also choose a peasants' tribunal of several judges, who have jurisdiction of offences of all classes, and of property disputes involving not over 100 roubles. Disputes of larger amount come under chiefs of the districts, who are taken from the nobility, and have a certain control over the peasants' tribunals. The system of local self-government is extended measurably to the district and province, where the administration of economical affairs is placed in the hands of an assembly called the Zem-

stvo, made up of nobles possessing a certain amount of land, and delegates elected by other landed proprietors, by the householders in the towns, and the peasantry. The executive power rests with the Uprava, who is nominated by the delegates. The power of the Zemstvos extend to matters of education, roads, saloons, public health, taxation, etc., and in many cases they have done valuable work, and shown a progressive spirit." This is the system of local administration devised in 1861. Theoretically it is progressive and democratic; in reality it is little better than a farce. Those who wish to obtain an insight into the conditions of rural Russia, and the state of the peasantry, will find much of interest in Count Tolstoi's remarkable novel, *Anna Karénina*.

From the primary unit of state organisation upwards, the absolute and strongly centralised system of government makes itself felt. The Mir and its Starosta have no political power or influence. To apportion the land among the inhabitants is avowedly the business of the Mir, but, if it has no political influence, it has social power over its own members of the most harsh and arbitrary kind. The peasant is bound to till the land allotted him, and to share the labours, fiscal burdens, and the military obligations of his commune. His bonds are "all the more strict and imperative, that they are imposed by his own equals; that his life is absorbed in theirs, and that he never can escape from them. If he departs, the Mir may recall him. If he stays to cultivate his share of land, the Mir may deprive him of it at the next distribution." It has also the power of sending its members in exile to Siberia, though it may not add the heavier penalties of imprisonment, or forced labour in the mines. At the next step in local ad-

ministration, the volost and its Starshina are under the uncontrolled rule of a state official and of the police, and have become mere tools of the local police and tax-gatherers. The tribunal of the volost is at the mercy both of influential landed proprietors, and of the merchants, and money-lenders. The Zemstvos are for the most part "compelled to limit themselves to the adjustment of the state taxation, which is so high that new taxes for education, sanitary purposes, and so on, must necessarily be very limited. Moreover, the decisions of the Zemstvos are jealously controlled by the representative of the Central Government—the Governor—and promptly annulled whenever they manifest a different spirit from that prevailing for the time at the Court. Disobedience is punished by dissolution, sometimes by administrative exile." In some districts where the peasants are in a majority, or the landowners are animated by a liberal spirit, much useful work, particularly on behalf of education, has been accomplished; but generally speaking the Zemstvos are mere creatures of the government, and the refuges of impecunious proprietors, and broken-down men in search of salaries and profitable jobs.

The serious defects in the system of dealing with the land at the time of the liberation of the serfs, also helped to neutralise the benefits of that wise and enlightened measure. The State in its anxiety to indemnify the landlords, or, to speak more accurately, in the selfish eagerness of the landlords to indemnify themselves at the expense of the State and of everyone else, opened opportunities for grave abuses, by which the landed classes have profited to a large extent. Instead of the amount to be paid to the landowner for ground ceded to the peasants being based

upon the value of the land, it was arrived at by estimating what amount of compensation should be given for the loss of the compulsory labour of the serfs; so that the price paid for the redemption of the land except in a few districts was much in excess of its value then or now. Moreover, taking advantage of the law regulating the size of the peasant holdings, "many proprietors cut away large parts of the allotments the peasants possessed under serfdom, and precisely the parts the peasants were most in need of, namely, pasture lands around their houses, and forests. On the whole, the tendency was to give the allotments so as to deprive the peasants of grazing land, and thus to compel them to rent pasture lands from the landlords at any price."* From an economic point of view the liberation of the serfs resulted in the enrichment of the few, and the further impoverishment of the many. Under the new state of things neither peasants nor landlords have prospered. The former are unable to bear the burden of taxation placed upon them, and to pay the rack rents demanded for land without which their allotments would be of no value. Large numbers of them are hopelessly in arrears; many more have ceased to be farmers, have become merely labourers, and have emigrated to remote districts of the Empire. On the other hand a considerable number of peasants, acting either individually or united in communities, have bought up many hundred thousands of acres of land, and thus freed themselves from all obligations to the landlord or State. But taken as a whole the condition of the Russian peasants is not hopeful.

The emancipation of the serfs awakened the ex-

**Encyclopædia Britannica*, Ninth Edition.

pectations of Russian reformers; and from this period date the many movements in favour of political reform. Much was at first hoped from Alexander II. who was both a humane and liberal-minded ruler. If he had been free to follow his personal convictions, many progressive measures, in addition to the abolition of serfdom, would no doubt have marked his reign. But the freeing of the serfs, and the rapid spread of Nihilism, which is wrongly confounded with the revolutionary movement by most English writers, alarmed the nobles and landed classes, who by their ascendancy in the Imperial Councils were able to frustrate all proposals for reform. Nihilism was originally a philosophy. Its adherents are described by Turgenief as men who "bow before no authority of any kind, and accept on faith no principle, whatever veneration surround it." The author of the new philosophy, which speedily spread throughout the educated classes, and gained a large number of adherents, was Alexander Herzen, one of the many famous literary men produced by Russia during the century. Though Nihilism was from the first closely allied with the workings of political thought, it was not, and never has been, associated with secret societies who sought to bring about the realisation of their objects by assassination and violence. It is curious that in all parts of the world, except Russia, the name should have become identified with the terrorist methods of the revolutionary party. But in Russia the revolutionists, whom we ignorantly call Nihilists, are known under a variety of terms, Radicals, Socialists, Anarchists, Popularists, and members of the two famous secret societies, the Will of the People, and Land and Liberty. It may be affirmed that while many Nihilists sympa-

thised with the political movements of the time, the great bulk of them took no part whatever in the political struggle. But their leaders were stirring advocates of reform and political progress, and were therefore singled out for persecution by the Government. Herzen was exiled to Perm, but escaped to Switzerland. Many of his brother authors were less fortunate, and died after years of imprisonment, or hard labour, in Siberia. Though temporarily crushed, the movement in favour of freedom revived three years later, and received fresh impetus in 1870 under the leadership of Netchaieff.

From this time the movement has continued to spread throughout Russia, in spite of the efforts of the Government to check it by every means in its power. Under the influence of Michael Bakunin, one of the most powerful of the revolutionary agitators, more extreme doctrines were adopted, and enthusiasm for reform greatly stimulated. "Young men and women of rich families abandoned their homes, and went to the villages and factories in the capacity of workers, schoolmasters in villages, medical helps, and so on, either simply to share with the people their life of privation, or to carry on a revolutionary propaganda."* Between the years 1873 and 1876 over 2,000 persons were arrested, imprisoned, exiled, and even flogged for their opinions. The flogging of political prisoners by the order of General Trépoff, the prefect of police at St. Petersburg, led to the attempt to assassinate him in 1878, by Vera Zasulitch, whose act caused great excitement, and whose courage aroused general sympathy with her. She was tried by a jury and acquitted, and an attempt to re-arrest her as she left the court led to a serious riot. The Government became more

* "Nihilism," in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*.

reactionary. All political prisoners were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Senate and trial by jury, and were dealt with secretly by courts-martial. Wholesale deportations to Siberia took place under circumstances of revolting cruelty. The Government seemed to imagine that anarchical ideas could be destroyed by violent measures. But while it spent its hatred upon hundreds of helpless victims, many of them guiltless of any wrong, it inflamed the animosity of its opponents, and enraged the friends of the sufferers. The revolutionists met violence with violence: a period of terror began. Official spies, a Governor-General, and the chief of the State Police, were murdered in rapid succession. Repeated attempts upon the life of the Tzar led to seventeen persons being hanged, and hundreds exiled. But there was no lack of volunteers to carry on the dangerous work of agitation and violence.

To the Tzar existence became a terror. If he travelled, the train that conveyed him was wrecked; if he ventured into the streets an assassin was at hand; if he stayed within his palaces, he was liable at any moment to be blown up by an explosion similar to that which destroyed a portion of the famous Winter Palace in 1880. The State was honeycombed by conspiracies. Count Loris-Melikoff was nominated president of a Supreme Commission for the management of the affairs of the State, and the Tzar, practically abandoned the attempt to rule. Constitutional reforms were promised, and there was a lull in the agitation; political crime ceased, and for a time there was hope of better things from both sides. But the Government recovered from its fright, and reverted to its old policy. No reforms were granted, and Loris-Melikoff, who had promised

them, was deprived of his office. The reign of terror was revived by the revolutionists, and on March 13th, 1881, Alexander II was assassinated. Though not a strong or capable ruler, the Tzar was a liberal-minded, kind-hearted man, who had done his best to discharge the heavy responsibilities laid upon him. It was a hard destiny that he, as the embodiment of a system, should have been chosen by the revolutionists as an object of their hate. The news of his assassination was received with horror throughout the civilised world, and for a time alienated much of the sympathy felt with the Russian agitation for reform. But neither the condemnation of their act as a great crime, nor the severity with which the government hunted down even those suspected of favouring them, deterred the revolutionists from carrying on their propaganda.

For three years afterwards Alexander III, who succeeded his father, did not venture to be crowned in his ancient capital of Moscow. Any hope of immediate reform vanished. The new Tzar proved to be far more reactionary than his father, and during the first seven or eight years of his reign no means were spared to crush out not only the revolutionary movement, but everything that made for liberty of thought, and enlightenment. Severe measures were taken against the universities, restrictions were laid upon all instruction in science and philosophy, the teaching of the history of comparative legislation was prohibited, the medical college for women was shut up, the efforts of private individuals throughout the country on behalf of primary and secondary education were stopped in part or in whole, Sunday schools were forbidden, the censorship over the press was made more stringent. By such means do Russian

statesmen imagine the progress of reform can be checked, and the spread of enlightened ideas prevented. It is the old story of King Canute and the sea, being reacted in all good faith at the dawn of the twentieth century! But as long as the curse of arbitrary power rests upon the Empire, and as long as that power is used to crush the people, prevent the spread of education, pervert justice, and uphold abuses, the desire for reform and liberty which has permeated the educated classes, and has begun to filter down to the masses, can never be extinguished.

The position of women, intellectually and morally, in the movements which are exercising so great an influence in Russia to-day, is one of the utmost importance. Fletcher of Saltoun declared that if he had the making of the ballads of a nation, he would not care who made the laws. But behind the maker of the ballad lie forces which teach the poet what he shall sing. The foot that rocks the cradle rules the world: and in Russia this power is being arrayed against the existing despotism. Notwithstanding the hostile efforts of the Government the cause of the higher education of women is further advanced in Russia than in any other European country, and continues to make great progress. Over a thousand women, after passing the same examination as men, have taken their degree as doctors. When the Ministry in 1888 closed the four universities for women, which had been established and were maintained by private effort, the students were over two thousand in number: while at the same period 90,000 pupils were attending 324 non-classical gymnasia for girls. But while the Government has done, and is doing, all in its power to prevent the higher education of women, the modern leaders in politics, literature,

and art, have welcomed women as intellectually equal comrades in work, and have extended to them in thought and action a considerate chivalry and moral equality which is only found among people of nobility and purity of character. As a natural result the sympathies of large numbers of educated women have been enlisted in the agitation for reform; and under the influence of misguided enthusiasm women have in many cases played an active part in conspiracies and political crimes. Fortunately, however, Russian revolutionists now appear to recognise that the cause they have at heart cannot be advanced by assassination, and that the way to victory lies in education for the masses, the spread of information, and other methods far removed from the violence and terrorism to which Alexander II fell a victim.

Alexander III was a Russian of the Russians, and during the thirteen years of his reign pursued a reactionary policy in all political, religious, and social questions. When his son Nicholas II succeeded to the throne in November, 1894, it was thought that this policy would be continued. The earlier utterances of the new Tzar were distinctly reactionary in tone. In replying to a deputation of delegates from local councils, who had gone to St. Petersburg to congratulate the Emperor and Empress on the occasion of their marriage, the Tzar warned his subjects against attaching any importance to the "foolish fancies" of members of the Zemstvos who asked that representatives of the people should be allowed to participate in the general administration of the internal affairs of the State. "Let all know that I devote all my strength to the good of my people, but that I shall uphold the principle of autocracy as

firmly and unflinchingly as did my ever-lamented father." But in many respects the Tzar has proved more liberal-minded than might have been expected from these words. The manifesto addressed to his people on his coronation in May, 1896, announced very large remissions of taxation and punishment in the case of nearly all prisoners including political offenders. During an important strike affecting over thirty thousand people in St. Petersburg none of the usually severe and arbitrary measures were taken. Something of the old confidence between the Emperor and his subjects has been re-established. When the Tzar and Tzarina visited Nijni-Novgorod in July, 1896, the streets instead of being lined with troops and police, were filled with peaceful citizens. Perfect order prevailed; and this signal act of courage on the part of the Emperor and Empress undoubtedly produced a good effect throughout the country. Gradually a more liberal and humane spirit has been introduced into many branches of Russian administration, though the punishment of flogging for even trivial offences has not yet been done away with. Nor have the stringent regulations against education been repealed. Distinguished professors of the chief universities continue to be dismissed on account of their liberal and progressive views. Police interference with university education still prevails, and attempts on the part of students to resist it lead to wholesale arrests.

In her foreign policy Russia never sleeps. She pursues the objects she has in view with unremitting energy; and her success is due not less to energy than to consistency. When her advance towards the Mediterranean was checked, she turned her attention to Central Asia, with the result that her boundaries

now extend to Afghanistan, and Russian influence predominates in Persia. Since Nicholas II came to the throne Russia has rapidly regained her ascendancy in the Balkans, and Bulgaria, Servia, and in a less degree Roumania, have thrown in their fortunes with the great Power of the North. In the East, Russia has pursued her forward policy with great success and has outdistanced all other Powers in obtaining valuable concessions from China. In 1896 she secured a convention for the construction of the Siberian railway across Manchuria. More recently the harbour of Kinchau has been occupied, Port Arthur has been secured as a naval station, and is being fortified, and an undertaking has been obtained that the Manchurian railways shall have the Russian gauge, and shall be extended to the ports of Ta-lien-wan and Port Arthur, and be connected with the Trans-Siberian railway. When that great line of railway is completed Russia will practically be at the gates of Peking. In Korea, which, by a treaty concluded in 1896 between Russia and Japan, was placed under the joint control of both Powers, Russia has sought to obtain a preponderating influence. More than once it seemed probable that her intrigues would give rise to a Russo-Japanese war. Temporarily, Japanese susceptibilities have been allayed by the conclusion of a convention under which both Russia and Japan recognised definitely the sovereignty and entire independence of the peninsula. Both Powers have pledged themselves to abstain from all direct interference in internal affairs, and not to take any action in Korea except by mutual agreement. At the same time Japan is left free to develop her commercial and industrial relations with the kingdom.

Japan represents the most romantic and not the

least important feature in a history of the political progress of the century. Little more than a generation ago the Japanese had no place among the civilised people of the world. For over two centuries they had lived in almost complete isolation, of the world forgetting, by the world forgot. Between 1638 and 1853 foreign vessels were not permitted to touch at Japanese ports. So rigorously was all foreign influence excluded that Japanese sailors wrecked on alien shores gained readmission to their native land with difficulty. The people, to quote one of their own proverbs, lived "like frogs in a well," and as far as the civilised world was concerned there appeared every probability that their "lotos-eating" existence would go on unbroken. From this somnolent state of complete isolation there has sprung up since 1868 a nation of extraordinary energy, capacity, and enterprise, that has shaken off the shackles of centuries of traditions, replaced feudalism by democracy, extended its commerce over the four quarters of the globe, called 'extensive industries and manufactures into existence, created a formidable army and a powerful navy, and won for itself a place among the civilised Powers of the earth. There is nothing more romantic in history, nothing stranger in fiction than this sudden rise and progress of Japan.

For centuries the Mikados, or hereditary Emperors, had ruled as absolute monarchs over the country. They claimed divine origin, and abused their "divine right" as kings as fully as any European Sovereign of mediæval times. So carefully was their divinity hedged about that the masses who obeyed their rule were seldom even permitted to set eyes upon the monarch they regarded as sacred. While supreme authority rested with the Emperors,

the duty of giving effect to their august decrees devolved upon the Shoguns, or military vice-regents, who seized and held the reins of power from 1192 until 1868. Subject to the nominal control of the far-off and dreamy Mikado, the Shoguns enjoyed the power and honour of an Eastern despot. By degrees all State affairs fell into their hands. Supported by the territorial nobility, they exercised a military control over the people which was quite as arbitrary and despotic as if it had been directly exerted by a ruler by "divine right." In this condition of feudalism the Japanese continued to exist until 1853, when the United States decided that in the growing interests of her trade with the East it was desirable that open ports should be established in Japan. Overtures for commercial intercourse had previously been made to the Shoguns by several nations, and summarily rejected. What could not be obtained by diplomacy the United States decided to secure by force. Commodore Perry was despatched with three or four frigates, and made a successful naval demonstration. The Shogun collapsed: and in 1854 a treaty was concluded with the United States. Other nations hastened to claim privileges similar to those Commodore Perry had extorted, and within a few years Japan had entered into treaty engagements with no less than sixteen other States. A number of Japanese ports were thrown open to foreign commerce, and within certain limited areas foreigners were permitted to take up their residence. Japan resumed relations with the outside world which had been interrupted since 1638, when the Portuguese traders were excluded from the country by the Shoguns, who in the interest of self-preservation felt that foreign intercourse, and Christianity, to which

many Japanese had become converts, were hostile to the political and religious systems upon which the safety of the military despotism rested.

During these long centuries of feudal rule, and partial or entire isolation, Japan had not enjoyed an untroubled existence. She had been torn by civil conflicts, and had engaged successfully in many foreign wars. It is significant that as far back as 1592 Corea had been invaded, and a crushing defeat inflicted upon the enemies of the Mikado. From the earliest times the Japanese troops have been conspicuous for their bravery. The qualities which enabled them to win victory after victory over the Chinese in recent years, are hereditary. That during centuries of oppression the people should have retained their valour, and should have achieved triumphs in art of permanent value to the whole world, are eloquent testimony to the fine qualities of the nation, and prophetic evidence of the future greatness of Japan in the history of the East.

For some time before the arrival of Commodore Perry and the influences he carried with him, the old feudal system had begun to fall to pieces. The new generation were in truth being suckled in a creed outworn. Traditions of western civilisation had lingered on from the contact of the people with the Portuguese. The most rigid policy of isolation could not prevent the Japanese catching faint echoes of the bugle calls to liberty and progress which were ringing in the ears of other nations. Feudalism was tottering to its fall, and the hostile influence exerted by the arrival of foreigners was the last touch needed to complete its overthrow. The dissatisfaction with the military domination and oppressive rule of the Shogun speedily made itself felt. Many of the most

powerful clans and nobles were in favour of a revival of the ancient régime, when the Mikado not only reigned but governed. The sentiment, the history, the aspirations of the nation were centred in their Emperor. He was still the embodiment of "divine right," the spiritual lord before whose authority everyone bowed in submission. Though the Shoguns had consolidated their power with much ability, their rule from its rise onwards had been one of might, divorced from the sentiment or affection of the people. Between the Emperor and his subjects the Shoguns had for centuries stood as the representatives of force and oppression. A secret visit which several Japanese nobles made to Europe opened their eyes to what civilisation meant, and to the fact that Japan had been left far behind in the march of progress. The information which the travellers carried back with them helped to precipitate events. No means were left unemployed to discredit the Shogun and increase the growing dislike with which he was regarded. "All possible means," says one writer, "were taken to involve him in complications with the ambassadors at his court; and to this motive, rather than to any hatred of foreigners, are to be ascribed the numerous assassinations which darkened the period immediately prior to 1868."* Civil war followed, resulting in a complete victory for the Mikado. The despotism of the Shoguns over a divided Japan was ended, and under the influence of the Emperor a united and potent nation sprang into existence. Thus the new period which has been named *Meiji*, "enlightened peace," has come, as was fitting, through the Mikado, or "The Honourable Gate."

From 1868 to 1889 Japan was employed in prepar-

* "Japan," in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*.

ation for the adoption of more liberal methods of government, in strengthening her position, and in asserting her influence in the politics of the East. In 1874 the first indication of her growing spirit was shown by the sending of a military expedition to Formosa to avenge the murder of Japanese subjects who had been shipwrecked on the island. This was the beginning of friction with China. Five years later, in spite of Chinese remonstrances and threats, she annexed the Loo Choo Islands; and in 1882 attempted to extend her sphere of influence over Corea. To carry out the spirited foreign policy necessary for the consolidation of the power, and the preservation of the safety of the nation, the Mikado and his advisers felt the necessity of reorganizing and increasing the army, and creating a navy. These tasks were entered upon with the extraordinary energy and confidence which have been characteristic features of Japanese history during the last quarter of the century. Strong self-reliance, a profound belief in their own destiny, a determination to obtain a foremost place amongst the nations of the world, have enabled the Japanese to accomplish within a few years results other nations have only achieved by centuries of patient effort. In 1882 conscription was adopted. Under this law all Japanese subjects are liable to serve from their twentieth year, and must pass three years either in the army or the navy. They then pass into the army of reserve for four years, after which they form part of the *landwehr* for another five years. Behind the *landwehr* is the *landsturm*, which comprises every male from 17 to 40 not in the active or reserve forces. The Japanese troops, which number 284,000 are disciplined after German methods, although no foreigner re-

ceives a permanent appointment in the army. Most of the war materials are prepared in the arsenals of Tokio and Osaka, the army rifle, the Murata, is a Japanese invention; and excellent Military Colleges and Schools have been established. In 1887 a scheme of coast-defence was begun, and with unfaltering energy the development of an efficient and powerful navy has been pursued. Many ironclads have been built in England for the Government, but in this as in other respects Japan's ultimate aim is to rely upon her own resources. An extensive ship-building programme has been laid down, and within a few years, the navy, already a notable force, will secure for Japan a position of great influence in the politics of the far East. At present her fleet, built or approaching completion, consists of 6 first class battle-ships, 4 armoured coast-defence vessels, 7 armoured cruisers, 16 protected cruisers, 5 third class cruisers, 12 gunboats, and a torpedo flotilla of nearly 100 first, second, and third class boats. The *personnel* of the navy, with a total strength of some 14,000 officers and men, is of a high order, and has given ample proofs of discipline, bravery, and skill.

In 1889 the Mikado, Mutsuhito, who had established a liberal form of government in 1873, which was further developed two years later, promulgated a popular constitution. By this measure Japan was placed on a footing of equality with many of the most enlightened states of the world. From having been an absolute monarchy the Government became a limited one. The Mikado, as the sovereign of the Empire, exercises executive powers with the advice and assistance of Cabinet Ministers, who are appointed by himself. A Privy Council was formed, upon whose advice the Emperor can fall back in

State matters of importance. The right of making war, and peace, and concluding treaties, remain nominally with the sovereign. But in reality the Emperor in these, and all other important matters, is controlled by the Imperial Diet, without whose consent no law can be made or altered. The Diet also has control over the national finances and the administration of justice. Of the two legislative assemblies, the House of Peers presents some features of great interest to people of the British Empire, who desire to see our own House of Lords reformed, and at once brought in touch with the people, and strengthened in its position as the second Chamber. In Japan the House of Peers is made up of five different elements. (1) Male members of the Imperial family, at least 20 years of age; (2) princes (11) and marquises (28) of 25 years of age; (3) counts, viscounts, and barons, 25 years of age, elected by members of their respective orders, the representatives of any order never to exceed one-fifth of the total number of members of such order; (4) persons over 30 years of age nominated members by the Emperor for distinguished services to their country; (5) persons over 30 years of age nominated by the Emperor and elected from each electoral district by the 15 male inhabitants thereof, who pay the largest amount of direct national taxes on land, industry or trade, all the fifteen tax-payers, who form this limited electorate, to be over 30 years of age. The total number of members under classes 4 and 5 must not exceed the total number of other members of the House. Members in classes 1, 2, and 4, hold their seats for life; but in 3 and 5, only for seven years. Thus in the formation of the House of Peers the hereditary, the representative, and the nominative principles are combined, and

the restrictions imposed show no little foresight and statesmanship. While the Japanese House of Peers is too far removed from democratic influences to cause it to be hurried in times of political stress and strain into hasty or ill-considered action, it is not hopelessly out of touch with the people. It cannot be overawed, as the British House of Lords has been, by threats of a wholesale creation of new peers; and in the event of a conflict with the House of Representatives, it should be able to maintain its position with independence and dignity. The working of this and other parts of the Japanese Constitution cannot fail to afford us during the coming years many instructive and valuable object lessons.

The three hundred members of the Japanese House of Representatives are elected upon a broad suffrage. The franchise has been extended to all subjects of not less than 25 years of age, who have resided for one year within an electoral district, and pay in direct national taxes not less than 15 yen, or about £2.5.0, per annum. The proportion of number of members of the House to the population is one to about every 128,000. Every qualified voter over 30 years of age, is eligible for election,—a far more liberal regulation than exists in Great Britain; and all members of the House of Representatives, and the elected and nominated members of the House of Peers, are paid by the State 800 yen (about £120) a year, in addition to travelling expenses. Voting at elections is by secret ballot, and the system is that of *scrutin de liste*. Although Japan, like other countries, has her own special difficulties, the new system of government has worked remarkably well. That a nation which only thirty years ago emerged from a condition of feudalism, should be capable of exercis-

ing successfully the privileges and responsibilities of self-government, is a proof of the many sterling qualities and of the high order of intelligence of the people.

In addition to her Ministry and Parliament Japan also possesses a complete system of local self-government to meet the requirements of the cities, towns, villages, and rural districts. Education throughout the Empire is free and compulsory. In 1895 when the population of Japan was 42,270,000 there were 26,631 elementary schools, with 73,182 teachers, and 3,670,345 pupils. This gives an average of one teacher to every 51 children, a better result than obtains in Great Britain. With a population of forty million there were in the United Kingdom in 1895 31,675 elementary schools with an average attendance of 5,615,073. Though in education Japan may still be far behind Europe it is evident from these figures that she will not remain so for long. Nor has she neglected the question of higher education. There were in 1895, 96 Lower Middle Schools, 7 High Schools, 15 High Schools for girls, 49 Normal, and 97 Technical Schools, 1,263 Special Schools, and three Universities. These higher educational institutions contained 7,044 teachers and 124,851 students. The great intellectual activity of the people is evident from the large number of books, periodicals and newspapers issued. In 1895 no less than 26,792 books, and 753 monthly, weekly, or daily periodicals, were published. Absolute freedom of religious belief is secured under the constitution. The system of Justice is founded on modern Jurisprudence, and the judges are appointed for life. In population, industries, commerce, shipping, and the construction of railways, the development of postal

and telegraphic facilities, Japan has made wonderful progress during the last five years of the century. In the future she is unquestionably a Power which will have to be reckoned with by all other nations.

In 1893 a series of disturbances in Corea gave Japan an opportunity, for which she had been watching, of extending her power over that peninsula. In 1873 and 1882 she had wrung concessions from the Emperor of Corea, and had gained a footing in the country. The considerable increase in the number of foreign merchants in their country was viewed with hostility by many of the inhabitants, and in 1893 demands were presented to the Emperor for the suppression of foreign religions and the expulsion of all foreign traders. A refusal of these demands led to disturbances, and a civil war was threatened. For generations Corea had acknowledged the suzerainty of China, though practically the kingdom was an independent one. To protect their national interests both China and Japan despatched men-of-war to Chemulpo, the port of Seoul, the capital. The rebellion continuing to spread, the King in 1894 applied to China for assistance, and 2,000 Chinese troops were sent to him. To this Japan responded by landing a force, nominally to protect her legation, consulates, and residents; and proposed to China a joint intervention to re-establish order and effect reforms. Upon the rejection of this proposal, Japan declared she would act alone, and promptly despatched her fleet and a force of 6,000 men to Seoul. The rebellion was put down, but the Japanese force did not retire. Having gained supremacy in Corea the Emperor of Japan intended to maintain it. He called upon the King of Corea to renounce the suzerainty of China, to dismiss the Chinese Resident, and

to accept Japanese protection. Encouraged by China, Corea rejected these demands, and in July fighting began. Although war had not been declared a Japanese cruiser fired upon and sank a Chinese transport with 1,500 troops on board. This was followed by the promulgation of an Edict by the Emperor of China, who declared that Corea had been a tributary to his throne for two hundred years, and commanded his troops to drive the Wojan, "the pestilent Japs," out of the country. War was declared, and Japan entered upon a campaign of unbroken victory.

China was ill-prepared for war. Her army was little better than an undisciplined, and badly equipped mob; her ships were old-fashioned, badly manned, and inefficiently commanded. Ping Yang, a strongly fortified place on the great north road in Corea, was captured on the 16th of September, and the Chinese army routed with great slaughter. Two days later the Chinese fleet was partly destroyed at the mouth of the Yalu River. Attempts at mediation on the part of Great Britain and the United States proved ineffectual. In October 22,000 Japanese troops were landed north of Port Arthur, and within three weeks the strongest fortress in China was captured. An advance was made upon Kinchou, and severe fighting took place in Manchuria, always with disastrous results to the Chinese. In January, 1895, Kaiphing was taken, and over 2,000 Chinese killed and wounded. A week later two Chinese Corps were routed near Niuchuang, and their guns captured; and the attack upon Wei-hai-Wei began. Its forts were held by a large force, the Chinese fleet rode in the bay, and preparations for the defence had been carefully made under the command of foreign officers in the Chinese service. The Jap-

anese attacked with 25,000 men, twenty-five men-of-war, fifteen armed transports, and twenty-two torpedo boats. On January 30th all the southern forts were captured, and thirteen days later Wei-hai-Wei, after much severe fighting and heavy loss of life, surrendered. One of the forts had been blown up by the naval gunner Li who perished in the explosion. General Tai, Admiral Ting, and three other Chinese officers of high rank, committed suicide. Ten large Chinese war vessels, besides many smaller ones, were captured by Japan. The others had been sunk, and the Chinese fleet had ceased to exist. On March 4th the ancient city of Niuchuang fell after five hours resistance, and a large force under General Sung was routed with much slaughter. Peking was in danger, the safety of the dynasty was threatened, and the Viceroy Li Hung Chang was despatched to Japan to conclude terms of peace. China renounced her claims over Corea. As an indemnity Japan received 230 million taels. The island of Formosa, and the Pescadores group of islands were ceded to her, and she was only prevented from retaining Port Arthur, and the Liao-tong Peninsula, by the intervention of the European Powers. A friend in need is a friend indeed. It was in the hour of defeat and adversity that Russia overwhelmed China with professions of friendship and offers of aid. Her assistance was not disinterested; her policy was astute. The loan needed to pay the huge war indemnity was guaranteed by Russia, and was therefore quickly raised on favorable terms. At the time British statesmen professed incredulity of a report that in exchange for such services Russia was to obtain important concessions in Manchuria, and to secure possession of Port Arthur. But we are now aware that Russian

diplomacy in 1895 was very far from being guided by sentiment. Thus ended the memorable war between the greatest and most ancient nation of the East, and the progressive Japanese, whom their enemies found even more "pestilent" than they anticipated.

But the Korean question remains. By the Convention between Russia and Japan it has been deferred, not settled. On the North East the Russian frontier is only separated from Corea by the Tiumen River. To the North the neutral zone between Corea and Manchuria has practically disappeared. Russian annexation of the whole of Manchuria is only a matter of time. With that object before her Russia cannot view with indifference Japanese pretensions in Corea. The 1740 miles of coast line, and the magnificent harbour of Port Lazaref, a rich territory of ninety thousand square miles, are not prizes which Russia will lightly relinquish to the rival from whom she has most to fear in the East. This is perfectly well understood in Japan. Will the Mikado wait until the Tzar has completed his trans-Siberian Railway, and the great naval depots being created, or will he as soon as the important additions to his fleet are finished, force the hand of Russia as he did that of China?

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. DISRAELI'S ADMINISTRATION.

THE foreign policy of Mr. Disraeli's administration of 1874-80 was fruitful of results. With some of these we have already dealt. In Turkey, in Egypt, in Afghanistan, in India, the British Prime Minister had pursued with varying success a policy which, if not always distinguished by a lofty political morality, was Imperial in spirit, consistent in purpose, and courageous in its recognition of the destinies of the Empire. Three other acts remain to be recorded. In 1874 the Fiji islands were annexed. The events that led up to the annexation of the Transvaal Republic in 1877 will be dealt with later. Little can be said in defence of the war in 1879 with the Zulus. It began with the defeat and slaughter of the British force under Lord Chelmsford at Isandula, an event which caused a painful sensation at the time. The death of the young French Prince Louis Napoleon was another melancholy incident. Cetewayo, the Zulu King, was eventually captured, and his army crushed, but the war from the first was unpopular, and time has not removed the impression that it might easily have been avoided. But at home the Conservative Ministry accomplished little that was memorable, or that can be said to have materially aided political progress. Many of the measures they introduced were abandoned; others were permissive instead of

compulsory and therefore led to comparatively small results; some were distinctly reactionary. But if no great reforms were carried, a number of useful acts of minor importance were added to the Statute Book.

The Bill for the abolition of lay patronage in the Church of Scotland has aptly been described as "a Liberal measure which had become a reactionary scheme by being brought into the world a generation behind its time." That was a fault for which the newly born Government could scarcely be held responsible. But what would have been a wise and generous concession had it been made before 1843, had become by 1874 of doubtful expediency and value. The great secession from the Church of Scotland under Dr. Chalmers, had been due to the system of patronage. A large body had been driven out of the Church to find ministers, and to build Churches, manses, and schools for themselves. The Free Church was the result of the system which the Bill sought to remedy. If the system of lay patronage was to be abolished as an evil, the action of Dr. Chalmers and his co-religionists in dissenting from the Established Church was vindicated. If time had justified their action, then the measure granting the reform for which they had pleaded in vain, should have done something to bring about a reunion of the Church and the great Presbyterian Communities who had been driven out of its fold. Mr. Gladstone, who led the opposition to the Bill, further objected to the exclusion of all parishioners who were not communicants, from any share in the future selection of ministers, and to the omission of any provision calculated to meet the peculiar needs of Highland parishes. The Bill was, however, passed by large majorities.

The Public Worship Regulation Bill, originally

introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, was another unfortunate measure. It was not a Government Bill, but during its progress through the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli took it under his special care. The debates gave rise to some curious passages between political allies. Mr. Gladstone in one of his greatest speeches, attacked the Bill on the ground that it threatened to deprive the Church of England of her spiritual freedom merely to obtain a more easy way of dealing with "the eccentricities of a handful of men." Sir William Harcourt attacked Mr. Gladstone with much bitterness, and declared that his speech could only be described as a plea for universal Nonconformity, or optional conformity. The Bill was disliked by many members and supporters of the Government. It was assailed by Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State for India. Mr. Disraeli retorted by describing Lord Salisbury as a man who never measured his phrases, "a great master of gibes, and flouts, and sneers." The object of the Bill was to put down Ritualism. The authority of the Bishops was strengthened and extended. They were given a general power of directory over public worship in the Church. Boards of lay and clerical assessors were created to advise the Bishops, and conduct inquiries into alleged irregularities. Parishioners, rural deans, and archdeacons, were granted a legal right to represent to the Bishops practices which were thought to constitute a grievance. If upon inquiry the practices complained of were condemned by the Bishop and his assessors, the Bishop would issue his monition. From that order the incumbent might appeal to the Archbishop with a board of assessors, whose decision should be final. The Bill was passed:

but the efforts to enforce its provisions have not been successful.

For several years Mr. Samuel Plimsoll had devoted his attention to the need of affording British seamen protection against being sent to sea in old and rotten vessels. He had accumulated a mass of facts proving that the gravest evils resulted from the wilful employment of unseaworthy ships, from overloading them, and under-manning them, from bad stowage, and from over-insurance. Large numbers of seamen had been sent to their death in order that "Ship-knackers," as Mr. Plimsoll called them, might reap fraudulent profits. Great as the evils undoubtedly were, they assumed an exaggerated proportion in the eyes of Mr. Plimsoll. A large-hearted, kindly enthusiast, the abuses which had been so nearly brought home to him during his inquiries, blinded his sense of justice and warped his judgment. In seeking to protect helpless sailors he indulged in many unjust and sweeping denunciations of shipowners both in and out of Parliament. But his motives were excellent, and his persistency at length forced the subject upon the attention of Government. In 1874 a stringent Bill introduced by Mr. Plimsoll was only defeated by a majority of three. The following year the Ministry brought in the Merchant Shipping Bill, but owing to the pressure of business announced its abandonment for the session on the 22nd of July. An extraordinary scene followed. Labouring under great excitement Mr. Plimsoll denounced the Government, and declared they were sending some thousands of men to certain death. Members of the House interested in ships or shipping were declared to be a murdering class, and Mr. Plimsoll shouted that he

would "unmask the villains." Neither the orders of the Speaker, nor the entreaties of his friends, could induce the Member for Derby to withdraw his expressions. They only led to reiteration of the term "villains," and to renewed declarations that he applied the epithet to certain members of the House. Eventually Mr. Plimsoll was persuaded to go for "a walk in the open air," and an ample apology followed a week later. But though Mr. Plimsoll's language was reprehensible, his cause was felt to be just. Mr. Disraeli was the first to admit that it was an ebullition of "sensibility," excited by Mr. Plimsoll's devotion to a great and a good cause. The Government yielding to the pressure of public opinion passed a temporary measure giving the Board of Trade additional powers. It fell far short of the reforms demanded by Mr. Plimsoll, and urgently needed for the protection of seamen; but the Government promised to supplement it by further legislation the following year. Early in the session of 1876 Sir Charles Adderley, the President of the Board of Trade, brought in and carried the Merchant Shipping Act. By this Act the Board of Trade was empowered to detain either for survey, or permanently, any vessel deemed unsafe, on account of defective hull, machinery, equipments, improper loading, or overloading. Every owner was compelled to maintain a painted mark on the side of his ship showing the line down to which the vessel might be loaded with safety. Restrictions were also placed upon deck-cargoes, the shipment of grain in bulk, and other matters. Great benefits followed the passing of this excellent measure, though it may be doubted whether the law regulating maritime insurance does not still require to be greatly strengthened. An attempt was made by Mr. Chamberlain to deal with the

whole question upon stringent lines in 1884; but the Bill had to be withdrawn. In 1890 on the initiative of Mr. Broadhurst, effect was given to Mr. Plimsoll's original demand that the fixing of the load-line on vessels should be taken out of the hands of owners, and made a duty of the Board of Trade.

Mr. Plimsoll's efforts, important as they were, only represent, of course, a fraction of what has been accomplished by Parliament, and by private effort, for the benefit of seamen, and the protection and safety of our great Mercantile Marine Service. To these many reforms both parties have contributed. During the last half of the century there has scarcely been a session without legislation on the subject. Lighthouses have been multiplied and improved; sound-signals have been established; harbours have been constructed, deepened, and made accessible; charts have been perfected; the classification of ships has been revised; tonnage measurement has been reformed; an excellent system of ship registry has been established; masters, mates, and engineers have been required to pass examinations; offices exist where seamen are engaged and discharged, where they receive their wages, and where their characters are recorded; savings-banks and money-orders are provided for them; and they have summary means of recovering wages. Life-boats, and rocket-apparatus for saving life from shipwreck, are established round the coasts; every wreck is made the subject of an investigation; international rules have been made for preventing collision; an international code of general signals has been established, as well as an international system of signals of distress; and the laws relating to merchant shipping have been codified.

Up to 1872 the Laws regulating the Liquor Traffic

had been scandalously lax. They are still very far from satisfactory, but before the Act passed by Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, during Mr. Gladstone's administration, the absence of reasonable control by the State over licensed victuallers had given rise to many abuses. At the time it was passed Mr. Bruce's Licensing Act was thought to be too stringent. A more enlightened public opinion would now condemn it as too mild. In many respects it was a beneficent measure. It imposed severe penalties for the illicit sale of drink, for permitting drunkenness or gambling upon licensed premises, for harbouring a policeman in such premises during the hours he was on duty, and for attempting to bribe any constable. The temptation to drunkenness was limited by restricting the time during which all licensed premises might be kept open, the local authorities being granted a discretionary power for extending the hours to meet the genuine requirements of any district. Every conviction which involved a fine of a pound or upwards was ordered to be endorsed on the license, which upon the recording of a third offence was to be forfeited, and the holder disqualified for five years, and his premises for two years, for receiving another. A register open to the inspection of every ratepayer was to be kept in each district, showing particulars of all convictions. In counties a committee of three justices, appointed annually from among the local magistrates, became the licensing authority; but in boroughs no license was valid unless confirmed by the body of Justices. To check the multiplication of small public houses, which are undoubtedly one of the chief causes of intemperance, all premises licensed in the future were to be of a suitable annual value, according to the locality. Justices interested in the manufacture or sale of in-

toxicants were excluded from taking any part in the administration of the law. Stringent provisions were made against the adulteration of beer. To see that the law was obeyed the police were empowered to enter licensed houses not merely for the purpose of enforcing order, but to "examine every room and part of such premises, and take an account of all intoxicating liquors found therein."

Against some of these restrictions the licensed victuallers, and others concerned in the drink traffic, raised a loud protest. It is humiliating to acknowledge that the interest is the most powerful one in Great Britain. Its power is increased by its unity, and effective organisation. In its support it maintains a great London morning paper. Numerous representatives of the trade are members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. For some years statesmen have delighted to recruit the peerage from the ranks of those who have been most successful in aiding the nation "to drink itself into prosperity,"—a happy phrase describing the enormous growth of the public revenue from the sale of intoxicants. Mr. Gladstone's Government did a bold thing, therefore, when it interfered, in the interests of public morality, with public-houses. It raised against itself a storm of opposition, by which the Conservatives under Mr. Disraeli largely profited. The results of the General Election, which relegated Mr. Gladstone to the shades of opposition, were due in no inconsiderable degree to the agitation of the licensed victuallers, the brewers, distillers, and their allies in trade. Mr. Bruce's Act had been denounced with great effect by the Conservatives, and they returned to office pledged to bring in a measure for the relief of the trade. But when Mr. Cross, the new Home

Secretary, came to deal with the question he found no little difficulty in carrying out the lavish promises of his party. It was easy to amend admitted defects in Mr. Bruce's Act, but to attempt the repeal of its many excellent clauses would have aroused the opposition of every elector who was not controlled by the liquor trade. The Bill of 1874 which was to do justice to the wronged publicans, proved a very mild one. It repealed the clauses dealing with the adulteration of beer. These were admitted to have been a dead letter. It took away from the police the power to enter and search licensed premises. There is no doubt that the powers conferred by the Act of 1872, were too large, and were not adequately safeguarded. It attempted to extend the hours during which the sale of drink might be carried on; but as amended in Committee the Bill placed further restrictions upon the time limit, except in the case of London. The endorsement of convictions upon licenses was left to the discretion of the magistrates instead of being compulsory. In other respects the Act of 1872 was not interfered with, and at the close of the century remains the principal law regulating the sale of intoxicants. What Mr. Bruce sought to accomplish by his adulteration clauses has since been secured under the "Sale of Food and Drugs Acts" of 1875, 1879, and 1899. But while earnest efforts have been made by both political parties to prevent the adulteration of every article of food or drink used by the nation, the law has not succeeded in defining satisfactorily what adulteration is. Fraud, and the use of ingredients deleterious to health, have been very largely put down, but in beer and many other articles it is left for the public analysts to define in each case what constitutes adulteration. The power of the drink trade in Great

Britain is shown by the fact that since 1874 no further laws have been passed for the regulation and restriction of the traffic, though its many evils are admitted by all thoughtful men. A proposal made by the Conservative Government in 1890 to arm the County Councils with powers which would have enabled them to reduce the number of public houses, had to be abandoned owing to opposition to the scheme of compensation by which it was accompanied. Hitherto the chief obstacle to any progress has been due to the difficulty of devising a scheme of reform which would satisfy the advocates of temperance, who are too often singularly intemperate in their language and demands, without inflicting hardship upon a large section of the community, and ruin upon a commercial interest of gigantic extent. In 1896 a Royal Commission was appointed to examine and report upon proposals for amending the laws in the public interest, "due regard being had to the rights of individuals." After an exhaustive enquiry two reports were issued in 1899, one by the majority of the Commissioners, and the other by the Chairman, Viscount Peel, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and seven other members. Of these two reports, both of great interest, Lord Peel's contains many recommendations which the new century will unquestionably see carried out. It is the first statesmanlike effort to deal with a most difficult and complex question upon broad lines of justice and efficiency.

A Bill introduced by Lord Sandon in 1876 further extended the benefits of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. The provisions for rendering attendance compulsory were enlarged; the limit of age under which no child might be employed was increased to ten; no child under eleven years of age, (to be raised

in four years to fourteen) might be employed who had not obtained a certificate of proficiency in the "Three Rs" from an efficient school; punishment was provided for employers or parents violating these provisions. To further encourage regularity of attendance children who attained a certain standard of proficiency within a stipulated age and made an adequate number of attendances, were to have their school fees paid by Government during three years.

The appellate Jurisdiction of the House of Lords which had been abolished by Mr. Gladstone's administration was now restored in a form more in harmony with modern requirements. Under Lord Cairns' Act a Court was established to relieve the House of Lords as a body of the duty of hearing cases of appeal. The new Court was to consist, in addition to certain Judges who were to be *ex officio* members of the tribunal, of Lords of Appeal in Ordinary, appointed by the Crown, and entitled during their term of office to sit as members of the House of Lords and as members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. A final appeal lies from this, as from all other Courts, to the full Court of the House of Lords, consisting of the Lord Chancellor, the Lords of Appeal, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and the Law Lords. Though Lord Cairns' proposals were severely criticised by his opponents at the time, they have worked well, and have given general satisfaction.

A number of measures of less importance were passed by the Conservative administration. The Artisans' Dwelling Act of 1875, for the suppression of what Mr. Cross happily termed "rookeries" in London, was admirable in principle, but it had two serious defects; it did not go nearly far enough, and the

compensation it granted to the owners of the worst classes of houses was excessive. The whole question of the housing of the working classes required to be dealt with in a large and liberal spirit. The Agricultural Holdings Bill passed in 1875 aimed at giving English tenants security for improvements made on their farms; but its value was practically destroyed by the law being made permissive instead of compulsory.

In 1876 a much needed measure was passed, regulating and restricting the practice of vivisection. Two Acts to prevent the enclosure of Common lands, and the pollution of rivers, were also creditable and desirable pieces of legislation. In 1877 a Bill was passed placing the control and management of all prisoners from the date of their commitment, under Government. The superior Courts of Ireland were reorganised; the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were given powers enabling them to extend the benefits of higher education; the jurisdiction of County Courts was reformed and enlarged. During 1878 a million of the money accruing to the Commissioners under The Irish Church Act, was appropriated for the purposes of Intermediate Education in Ireland, to encourage which a special Board was established. Elementary and Secondary Education in Scotland were promoted by two Acts; four new bishoprics,—those of Liverpool, Newcastle, Southwell, and Wakefield—were founded, and arrangements made to provide further episcopal supervision as occasion might arise by an order of the Queen in Council; public-houses in Ireland were closed on Sunday; the laws relating to factories and workshops were strengthened, and the Public Health Act amended. In 1879 the Government made a feeble endeavor to deal with the complicated subject of University education in Ire-

land. Their measure pleased no one. It alienated many of their supporters, it did not conciliate the Irish Catholics. Queen's University was abolished, and in its place a new University open to all comers was created, with powers to conduct examinations, and confer degrees in all Faculties except Theology. The Mutiny Act and the Articles of War were revised and consolidated in a new measure entitled the Army Discipline Act, which gave rise to prolonged discussion upon flogging as a punishment in the service. Lord Hartington, after much hesitation, moved a resolution, which was supported by Mr. Gladstone, for the total abolition of flogging except as a substitution for the penalty of death, but the motion was defeated by 289 to 183. The Corrupt Practices Acts were amended and made perpetual instead of temporary; and an Act was passed "for more effectually providing for prosecutions in England," by empowering the Home Secretary to appoint a Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Session of 1875 witnessed the beginning of those scenes of disorder in the House of Commons, and organised attempts to prevent the transaction of all public business, which were a disgrace to the members who took part in them, and led to drastic changes in the regulations governing Parliamentary procedure. The disorders began in the election of John Mitchel for Tipperary, and the refusal of the House to admit him as a member because he had escaped from a sentence of fourteen years' transportation by breaking his parole. Dr. Kenealy's return for Stoke, and his ridiculous agitation on behalf of the Tichborne Claimant added to the troubles. An order calling upon two printers to attend at the Bar of the House to answer a supposed breach of privilege, drew attention to the

anomalous Parliamentary rules which existed regarding the press. Mr. Disraeli declined to enter upon a revision of the question of Parliamentary privilege. The Irish members rejoiced at having discovered a new way of tormenting their opponents. Whenever a particularly inconvenient opportunity arose, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Sullivan, or some other Irish member, would spring up and cry out that they "espied strangers," whereupon the proceedings of the House were stopped, and the Speaker was compelled to order all strangers to withdraw. Under the standing orders the Prince of Wales and the reporter of an Irish newspaper were turned out with equal impartiality. Eventually the difficulty was removed by altering the standing order so as to leave it to the discretion of the Speaker whether or not strangers should be excluded.

During the session of 1877 new forms of obstruction were devised and led to scenes which seriously discredited Parliamentary Government. Mr. Parnell, who had been returned to the House two years previously, was rapidly asserting his remarkable qualities as a leader and Parliamentary tactician. The House having repeatedly refused by overwhelming majorities to entertain the demand for Home Rule, Mr. Parnell originated what he termed "a policy not of conciliation but retaliation." The objects of this policy were to render both the Government and the House of Commons ridiculous, and to paralyse all legislative effort. The rules of procedure in the House had been framed when members of all shades of opinion were inspired by a high regard for the dignity and traditions of the British Parliament. To preserve the rights of minorities, and secure the fullest liberty of speech, had been the object of both the great parties

in the State. Among the rules of procedure one provided that any member might move for an adjournment of the House, or of a debate. There were no restrictions as to the number of times a member might repeat his motion, just as there were no restrictions as to the number of verbal amendments which might be proposed upon each successive clause of a bill. The House of Commons had been hitherto assumed to be an assembly of gentlemen. Many stormy scenes, many outbursts of passion had taken place within its walls. But until now men had always been restrained from grossly abusing these privileges by a sense of self-respect, and of what was due to their position as members of a great, a free, and an historic legislature. Over Mr. Parnell and his little band of followers these influences exercised no control. In the liberties secured to minorities they saw nothing but an effective weapon of vengeance. They cared nothing for the traditions of the British Parliament. To discredit it was to them a joy not a sorrow. Every consideration of decency, of chivalry, was swallowed up by political passion, by an overweening sense of their own importance, by an insatiable thirst for notoriety. In the early days of July a handful of Irish members began their system of organised obstruction. During the discussion on the army estimates Mr. O'Connor Power moved to report progress. The motion was defeated by 128 votes to 8. Sixteen motions of a similar character were moved in succession, and four attempts were made to count out the House. From one until seven o'clock on the morning of July 3rd members in attendance were kept busy walking through the division lobbies, with no object but to gratify the vindictive feelings of an Irish minority, which at first only numbered eight and soon fell to five. If these

tactics were to be continued it was evident the rules of debate would have to be revised. But the patience of the majority was not yet exhausted. It was hoped that Irish members would recognise the futility and unseemliness of their conduct. During the following three weeks more moderate councils prevailed. But on July 25th Mr. Parnell was reported to the Speaker for having used certain words, and was ordered to withdraw from the House. On July 31st a disgraceful scene occurred. During the consideration in Committee of the South African Bill, resort was had to every device permissible under the rules of procedure to prevent progress. Unfortunately, the Government instead of boldly grappling with the difficulties that faced them had determined to defeat the Irish members by their own methods. They had arranged that the House should be attended night and day by relays of fresh members, who would carry on the fight until the faction was overcome by physical exhaustion. It was an unworthy and undignified proceeding. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had become leader of the House on the elevation of Mr. Disraeli to the peerage, was ill-fitted to battle with the Obstructives. He was neither an eloquent speaker nor a strong leader. He was essentially an English country gentleman, mild, conciliatory, and anxious not to wound the susceptibilities of his fellow-men, or do anything unworthy of the traditions of Parliamentary freedom of speech and action. But his generous motives were wasted, his forbearance misunderstood. When at times he was goaded to action he frequently chose the wrong moment, and the wrong way. He was severe when it would have been better to remain mild, and conciliatory when he should have been harsh. The sitting of the House continued for

twenty-six hours, amid scenes of tumult and disorder. A select Committee of the House, appointed to consider what steps should be taken to prevent wilful obstruction, reported in 1878. They recommended that power should be given to the Speaker to "name" any member guilty of obstruction, and that it should be in the discretion of the House to suspend him for the remainder of the sitting: secondly, that all motions for the adjournment of the House or a debate should be supported by at least twenty members, who should be called upon by the Speaker to rise in their places. These and other changes were adopted at the opening of the session of 1880.

During 1878 the dissensions in the Irish Home Rule Party resulted in its separation into two factions. The smaller and more extreme party was led by Mr. Parnell, whose agitation had already begun to bear evil fruits. With the growth of Mr. Parnell's influence there proceeded a steady growth of agrarian crime in Ireland. How far Irish politicians may morally be held responsible for the violence and intimidation, which, beginning with the assassination of the Earl of Leitrim in April, 1878, speedily developed into a widely organised reign of terror throughout Ireland, we are not called upon to determine. But it is impossible to deny that the spread of agrarian crime followed closely upon the rise of political agitation. During 1879 disorder and crime continued to increase. The agitation conducted by Mr. Parnell, who made a tour through Ireland and addressed a large number of meetings, was aided by the fall that had taken place in the price of all agricultural produce, poor harvests, and a partial failure of the potato crop, leading to severe distress in some localities

in the west. Landlords were denounced, a reduction of rents demanded, and the system prohibiting anyone from taking a farm from which a tenant had been evicted for non-payment of rent, was inaugurated. Landlords who resorted to eviction were described as "enemies of the human race," and Mr. Parnell urged that if tenants would only refuse to pay any rent they would be able to dictate their own terms. So far the Roman Catholic Clergy had remained hostile to the new movement. A great meeting held by Mr. Parnell at Westport was condemned by Archbishop McHale as "a combination, organised by a few designing men, who, instead of the well-being of the whole community, seek only to promote their personal interests." In October the National Irish Land League was founded, Mr. Parnell being chosen its President. The avowed objects of the League were to secure reductions of rent, refusal to pay any rent where reductions were not granted, an entire change in the land laws, and the substitution of peasant proprietors for landlords. Mr. Parnell carefully avoided any breach of the law personally. Other speakers were less discreet, and Davitt, Daly, Killen, and Brennan were arrested for using seditious language, but were released on bail. The Government showed much firmness in maintaining law and order, and every effort was made to assist localities in which real distress prevailed.

The dissolution took place on March 23rd, 1880, and with it ended the Conservative administration. During the previous autumn a political campaign had been conducted throughout the country by both Parties with remarkable energy. Mr. Gladstone undertook the first of those campaigns in Mid-

lothian, which were alike astonishing for the energy and eloquence which characterised them. In a series of speeches, which have rarely been equalled, he reviewed every political question of the hour, and poured upon his opponents a flood of criticism, sarcasm, and invective, which produced an extraordinary effect throughout the country. Among his many important declarations there was one to which subsequent events lent extraordinary interest. In dealing with Home Rule he asked in what way it was related to local government, and went on to say: "I am friendly to local government. I am friendly to large local privileges and powers. I intensely desire to see Parliament relieved of some portion of its duties. I see the efficiency of Parliament interfered with not only by obstruction from Irish members, but even more gravely by the enormous weight that is placed upon the time and the minds of those whom you send to represent you. We have got an over-weighted Parliament; and if Ireland, or any other portion of the country, is desirous and able so to arrange its affairs, that by taking the local part or some local part of its transactions off the hands of Parliament, it can liberate and strengthen Parliament for Imperial concerns, I will give a zealous support to any such scheme. One limit, one limit only, I know, to the extension of local government. It is this. Nothing can be done, in my opinion, by any wise statesman or right-minded Briton to weaken or compromise the authority of the Imperial Parliament, because the Imperial Parliament must be supreme in these three Kingdoms. And nothing that creates a doubt upon that supremacy can be tolerated by any intelligent and patriotic man."*

* Mr. Gladstone's *Second Midlothian Speech*, Nov. 26th 1879.

Immediately before the dissolution Lord Beaconsfield addressed a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in which after stating that the condition of that country had long occupied the anxious attention of the Government, he said that "a danger, in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine," now distracted the Sister Isle. "A portion of its population is attempting to sever the constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both. It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of this nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its widespread dependencies." He warned the nation against the dangers of a policy of disintegration, and of the critical issues which largely depended upon the verdict of the country. It is possible that he foresaw the course events would subsequently take. But it was not until some years later that the public had any suspicion that Home Rule would be adopted by the leader of the Liberal Party. Mr. Gladstone's declaration in favour of maintaining the supremacy of Parliament had been so clear and emphatic as to reassure all sections of the nation. A suggestion at this time that the great leader of the Liberals would capitulate to the forces of Irish Nationalism would have been repudiated with indignation.

The result of the appeal to the constituencies was almost a foregone conclusion. Many causes had conspired to bring about a defeat of the Ministry. Great depression in trade accompanied by bad seasons had caused much suffering and discontent. The Zulu War had been unpopular. It was generally thought to

have been unnecessary and unjust. But above all things Mr. Gladstone's eloquence and destructive criticism told against the Conservatives. When the contest was over it was found that 355 Liberals, 238 Conservatives, and 62 Home Rulers had been returned, giving the Liberals a clear majority of 55.

CHAPTER XVII.

LIBERAL STATESMEN AND IRISH AGITATORS.

FROM the day the result of the appeal to the country was known there was no doubt as to who would be the new Prime Minister. Nominally Lord Hartington had been the leader of the Liberal Party since 1875. But during the stormy years that followed, it was Mr. Gladstone who had rallied the forces of the Opposition, had led the attack time after time, and had finally secured the overthrow of the Conservative Government. In accordance with custom the Queen first sent for Lord Hartington, who made no attempt to form a ministry, and the duty was entrusted to Mr. Gladstone. Among the other members of the new Cabinet were Earl Granville, Foreign Secretary, Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberley, Secretary for the Colonies, Mr. Forster, Chief Secretary for Ireland, Sir William Harcourt, Home Secretary, and Mr. Chamberlain, President of the Board of Trade. Mr. Gladstone was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

A question which caused many angry scenes, bitter debates, and complicated proceedings, arose on the third day of the session of 1880. Among the members returned to the House of Commons was Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, who had been elected for Northampton. Mr. Bradlaugh was a man who had gained notoriety as a lecturer and writer of much

force and eloquence. He had for some years been the exponent of social and religious views which were regarded with repugnance by the great mass of the nation. Although he disclaimed the term of atheist, the theories of which he was the champion, are what people generally stigmatise as atheistic. He had assailed Christianity, and revealed religion in every form. An avowal of his opinions had not been forced upon him by circumstances. He had not been obliged to repudiate belief in the doctrines held by the mass of his fellow countrymen in order to avoid doing violence to his conscience. On the contrary, he had deliberately set himself up as an opponent of Christianity in particular, and revealed religion in general; and in addition had been an active propagator of the most questionable theories of Malthus. Mr. Bradlaugh's personal character and private life were singularly blameless. But at the time he was elected to Parliament it is not too much to say that while he had many admirers and sympathisers, he was the incarnation of evil to a very large number of people.

They detested his religious views; they disliked the manner in which he expounded his opinions and attacked all religion; they regarded much of his social philosophy as dangerous and immoral.

After the election of the Speaker, the first business in a newly elected House of Commons is the administration of the oath of allegiance to members. This is generally a tedious and merely formal business. On presenting himself at the table of the House where the swearing in takes place, Mr. Bradlaugh claimed to be allowed to make an affirmation instead of taking the oath. Called upon by the Speaker to state the reason of his claim, Mr. Bradlaugh replied that the Parliamentary Oaths Act of 1866 had established the right

of affirmation under certain conditions, and that for some years he had repeatedly "affirmed in the highest Courts of Jurisdiction" in the realm. "I am ready," he added, "to make the declaration or affirmation of allegiance." The Speaker (Mr. Brand) declined to make any ruling, and submitted the question to the judgment of the House. A select committee was appointed to consider the matter, and decided by the casting vote of its chairman that the oath should not be dispensed with in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh. On the 21st of May Mr. Bradlaugh again presented himself at the table and asked to be sworn. To this Sir Henry Wolff objected, and moved a resolution that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted to take the oath. Mr. Gladstone argued that it was not competent for the House to prevent a duly elected member taking the oath which the law prescribed. The resolution was defeated by 289 votes to 214; and a second select committee was appointed to inquire into Mr. Bradlaugh's claim to be sworn, and into the jurisdiction of the House to refuse it. The committee by a large majority reported against the claim of Mr. Bradlaugh, and after a two days' debate the House decided on June 22nd that he should not be allowed to take the oath. On the following day Mr. Bradlaugh renewed his demand. It was again refused, and he was ordered to withdraw. He declared the order illegal and refused to obey it. Removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms, he immediately walked back into the House, whereupon he was taken into custody and imprisoned in the Clock Tower. On the following day he was released and renewed the contest. On the 2nd of July, Mr. Gladstone moved a resolution to the effect that every person returned as a member of the House of Commons, who claimed to be a person

permitted by law to make an affirmation instead of taking an oath, should, notwithstanding the resolution adopted by the House on June 22nd, be permitted to make an affirmation in the form prescribed by law, subject to any liability by statutes. This was carried by 303 votes to 249; and the following day Mr. Bradlaugh made the affirmation and took his seat.

The dispute now entered upon a new phase. Heavy penalties are provided by law against any one not fully qualified speaking and voting in Parliament. Mr. Bradlaugh took part in more than one division. He was prosecuted. The Judges decided that the Act which enabled Jews, Quakers, and other persons, to affirm instead of taking the oath did not extend to the present case; and that Mr. Bradlaugh was incapacitated for sitting in the House of Commons as he had not taken the statutory oath. They added the important declaration that no one could be excluded from the Legislature on the ground that he held no religious belief. The seat was declared vacant, and Northampton re-elected Mr. Bradlaugh. When he presented himself again at the table, Sir Stafford Northcote carried a resolution asserting that he should not be permitted to commit an act of profanation by going through the form of taking the oath. Time after time Mr. Bradlaugh demanded to be allowed to take the oath, only to be refused. He attempted amid discreditable scenes to administer the oath to himself; he was repeatedly removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and on one occasion had to be forcibly ejected by ten policemen. Again and again he resigned his seat, and was re-elected by his constituents.

Petitions for and against Mr. Bradlaugh's admission were sent to Parliament; meetings and counter-demonstrations were held throughout the country; and Mr.

Bright warned the House that to continue to exclude the duly elected representative of a great constituency, whom the courts had declared was not constitutionally disqualified from sitting in the Legislature, was a dangerous course which might lead to calamitous results. But his advice was ignored, and the dispute continued until after the next General Election, when at the opening of Parliament in 1886 the new Speaker, Mr. Arthur Peel (afterwards created Viscount Peel) declared that no one had a right to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh or any other duly elected member taking the oath required by law. Subsequently an Act was passed permitting any member to make an affirmation; and just before Mr. Bradlaugh died, in 1891, the House generously passed a resolution expunging from its records the motions which had been passed for his exclusion between 1880 and 1885.

We have no sympathy with Mr. Bradlaugh's peculiar opinions; but in looking back upon the conflict into which the House of Commons was plunged, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that in the many discreditable scenes which occurred Mr. Bradlaugh played a more worthy part than his opponents. However much we may dislike his opinions, it must be admitted that they were sincerely held, and courageously maintained. For five years he fought a battle against overwhelming odds, with patience, earnestness, and dignity. His refusal to obey the orders of the Speaker caused deplorable scenes, but Mr. Bradlaugh was acting strictly within his legal and constitutional rights. If his motives were not lofty, they were at least as respectable as those which animated many of his opponents, whose chief object was to make party capital out of the conflict. In the moderate and constitutional action of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues,

extreme partisans saw a chance of discrediting the Government, by holding them up as sympathisers with an odious atheist. If there were any two men against whom it might be thought such a charge would not lie, they were Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, the loftiness and sincerity of whose religious convictions everyone would now admit; yet it was especially through them, and their conduct during the Bradlaugh conflict, that attempts were made to strike at the Ministry. The controversy is also memorable from the fact that it led to the formation of a new Party in Parliament,—the famous Fourth Party, which curiously enough consisted of only four members, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Henry Wolff, and Mr. (now Sir John) Gorst. The conflict between Mr. Bradlaugh and the House afforded Lord Randolph Churchill irresistible opportunities of harassing with “impartial energy the leaders of the Government and the leaders of the Opposition,” and he made the most of them. It would be difficult to say whether Mr. Gladstone or Sir Stafford Northcote suffered most from the jeers and taunts, the wilful misrepresentation and the audacious personalities of the leader of the Fourth Party.

The number of Acts added to the Statute Book during the session of 1880 was small. The Burial Laws Amendment Act put an end to a painful and bitter controversy. By the Common Law of England everyone is entitled to be buried in the churchyard of his or her parish. The right never depended upon the creed professed, or the religion of any particular church. It was a civil right not a religious one. While it could not be denied, it had long been granted under circumstances peculiarly odious and oppressive to all Nonconformists. Until 1880 no form of burial

service except that of the Church of England could legally be used in any parish churchyard. For years the demand for an alteration of the law in the interests of dissenters had been pressed upon Parliament without result. But eventually the change for which individual Liberals had fought was effected. The new Act provided that upon notice being given to the incumbent a burial might be carried out with any "Christian and orderly religious service," or without any service, if the proceedings were not made the occasion of bringing into contempt any church or denomination. Non-Christian rites were specifically excluded from the Statute, which far from affording any encouragement to irreligion, merely sought to give Nonconformists in the solemn duty of burying their dead the same rights and liberties enjoyed by members of the Church of England.

Another much needed reform was brought about by a measure for the protection of occupiers of land against the ravages of hares and rabbits. In many instances tenant farmers had suffered heavily through the depredations of "ground game." Over-preservation of game is generally the policy of rack-rent landlords. Where the landlord is a man of liberal views and kindly sentiment nothing could work more admirably than the British Land and Game Laws. But where the proprietor of the land is not actuated by a high sense of duty and consideration for the welfare of his fellow-men, he finds in many of those laws effective means of oppression. In parts of the country the damage caused by ground game, for which little or no compensation could be obtained, had become a scandal. Farmers saw their crops day by day destroyed and could do nothing. To kill one of the hares or rabbits which were eating up their sub-

stance was an indictable offence punishable by fine or imprisonment. The Act of 1880 gave the occupier of the land the concurrent and inalienable right to kill all the ground game on his farm, and made any contract he might agree to, waiving that right, incapable of enforcement by law.

The growing land agitation in Ireland, fostered by the Land League under Mr. Parnell, had been described by Lord Salisbury as resembling a wild beast, which one could no more satisfy by concession than he could keep off a tiger by giving it his hand. But at the beginning of his second administration Mr. Gladstone had determined to risk the experiment. Ireland was to be conciliated. During his electioneering campaign he had appealed to Irish discontent against the Government. The appeal had been successful. If the new Ministry were not committed to any very definite methods of concession, they were pledged to attempt a further drastic reform of the land laws. The first step in the new policy of conciliation was an announcement in the Queen's Speech, at the opening of the session of 1880, that the Peace Preservation Act for Ireland, which expired in June, would not be renewed. While determined to provide for the security of life and property, the Government felt confident that nothing beyond the ordinary law, firmly administered, was required for the maintenance of peace and order. The step was a fatal one. It gave rise to terrible consequences.

Mr. Parnell and his followers were incapable of appreciating the high motives by which Mr. Gladstone was actuated. In his promises of reform they saw not conciliation but weakness. They believed they had only to go far enough to extort everything they demanded. They understood Mr. Gladstone better

than Mr. Gladstone understood himself. In the political duel which now began between Mr. Parnell and Mr. Gladstone, the Liberal leader was at a hopeless disadvantage. He was actuated by the highest motives; by a profound desire to benefit the Irish people; by a sincere belief in the integrity of his opponents; by a conviction that a removal of certain grievances would appease Irish agitators. No statesman has ever been inspired by more generous sentiments. In Mr. Parnell's composition there was not a spark of generosity. He was cold, and crafty; he looked upon politics as a game; every move was carefully studied; every blunder was taken advantage of, every sign of weakness was turned to account. He was as unscrupulous as Mr. Gladstone was conscientious, as unimpassioned as Mr. Gladstone was ardent, as cool and calculating as his opponent was rash and generous.

Two Bills dealing with Ireland were brought forward by the Government. The first, which secured the Royal Assent, appropriated public money to be spent in carrying out various works, thus affording relief in districts where distress was exceptional. The Compensation for Disturbance Bill was a temporary measure. It conferred upon Irish County Court Judges in certain districts the right to grant compensation for improvements in cases where tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent. Mr. Gladstone described the Bill as an exceptional measure rendered necessary by exceptional circumstances. It was framed to meet the pressing needs of the country, until a comprehensive land reform bill could be passed. In some parts of Ireland a condition almost amounting to civil war was admitted to prevail. This was less than two months after the Peace Preservation

Act had been allowed to expire. Mr. Forster defended the Bill on entirely different grounds. He did not pretend to say that the peace of Ireland could not be preserved without the measure. It had been introduced because "the ministers wished to be able to enforce the law with a good conscience." Though strongly opposed, the Bill passed the House of Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by an overwhelming majority.

Before the adjournment of Parliament Mr. Forster stated that while the condition of certain parts of Ireland gave cause for anxiety, he was more hopeful than ever that there would be no need for exceptional legislation to maintain law and order. Events soon proved how wrongly he had estimated the situation. Freed from all fear of interference, Mr. Parnell and a host of unscrupulous agitators lost no opportunity of stirring up strife. The Land League had grown into a powerful organisation. Its resources were now used to the utmost. From one end of Ireland to the other the ignorant peasantry were taught that the land rightfully belonged to them; that the payment of rent was a grievance; and that landlords were unjust oppressors whom it was within the power of the tenants to get rid of altogether. Speaking at Ennis, Mr. Parnell advised the people to treat any one who attempted to take a farm from which a tenant had been evicted, "as if he were the leper of old." He was to be "shunned in the street, in the shop, in the market, even in the place of worship." The advice was adopted. Boycotting was established.

At this and other meetings Mr. Parnell's speeches were, from beginning to end, veiled incitements to outrage. He did not advocate the crimes which were daily growing in number. But the ignorant peas-

antry who crowded to hear him speak, went away with the impression that in resisting the law and resorting to violence they were acting with the full approval of their leaders, and in a manner that would obtain for them valuable concessions. The tenant-farmers were told that if they refused as a body to pay any rent the landlords would be helpless. In a speech at Longford, Mr. Parnell divided land-reformers into two classes,—those who demanded that the Government should fix the rent which the tenant should pay as a never-ceasing tax; and those who claimed that the tenants had for centuries been rack-rented, had long since paid the landlord for the fee-simple of the land, and in justice were entitled to restitution instead of being asked to pay any more. Between these two opinions the Land League halted. “The extreme limits of our demands,” Mr. Parnell added, “must be measured, when the time comes, by the result of your exertions this winter.”

One of the first results of these “exertions” was the murder of Lord Mountmorres, who on September 25th was shot within a mile of his residence in County Galway. The crime produced a great sensation. At this period none of the Irish agitators, except Mr. John Dillon, entered a protest against murder and deeds of violence. Some of them, like Mr. Parnell, were too astute openly to advocate crime; they were equally guarded not to denounce it. Wherever the Land League held its meetings, outrages sprang up. A reign of terror was gradually being extended throughout Ireland. This was the response to Mr. Gladstone’s first overtures of conciliation.

But unless Ireland was to be allowed to lapse into a state of anarchy something had to be done. After repeated meetings of the Cabinet additional troops

were despatched to Ireland, and the prosecution of the leaders of the Land League was begun. Fourteen members, including Mr. Parnell, were indicted for conspiring to prevent the payment of rents, to defeat the law, to prevent the reletting of farms, to create ill-will between different classes, and to commit other similar offences. The prosecutions were openly laughed to scorn by the incriminated persons. They attended Land League meetings more frequently and indulged in more violent language than before. The authorities were held up to ridicule for attempting to prosecute them. No one besides Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues believed there was a chance of the prosecutions being successful. No Irish Jury could be got who would convict the heads of the Land League. Before the trial began all possible jurymen were warned that if the heads of the League were convicted, it would mean ruin to those who found them guilty. At the conclusion of the trial on January 24th, 1881, the Jury disagreed, and the defendants were discharged.

It is scarcely possible now to realise the condition into which Ireland had been plunged. Speaking at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, in November, 1880, Mr. Gladstone acknowledged that the first obligation incumbent upon the Ministry was "to protect every citizen in the enjoyment of his life and of his property." The sentiment was admirable. Let us contrast it with the state of things which existed in Ireland under what Mr. Parnell termed the "Christian and charitable" plan of treating people as if they were lepers. Near Lough Mask, in County Mayo, Captain Boycott rented a large farm, and was agent for Lord Erne's property. Acting on the advice persistently urged by the Land League, Lord Erne's

tenantry tendered not their rents which were due, but the amount they considered they ought to pay. The offer was naturally declined, and as they then refused to pay any rent at all, Captain Boycott took out ejectment processes. The process-server was roughly used, and the following day all labourers and servants in Captain Boycott's employ were warned to leave. Refusal was impossible. Every servant instantly quitted the place. The animals on the farm were left uncared for; the crops lay rotting in the fields. Local shopkeepers were forbidden to have any dealings with "the leper"; the postman who carried his letters was threatened, even telegraph messengers were warned. Captain Boycott was effectively isolated. Ruin stared him in the face. When the facts became known a relief expedition was organised in Ulster. Within a few days £800 was subscribed, and hundreds of men volunteered to march to Lough Mask and save Captain Boycott's crops. One hundred were chosen, but their departure was forbidden by the Government. Nine hundred soldiers were sent to Claremorris and Ballinrobe, in the neighborhood of the farm, to keep the peace, and fifty volunteers from Cavan and Monaghan were employed to gather in the crops. When the task was completed, and the troops were withdrawn, Captain Boycott and his family had to flee the country. Their lives would not have been worth an hour's purchase if they had remained.

The Land League was triumphant. In a letter to the sympathisers in America, who paid the expenses of the Irish agitators, Mr. Parnell boasted that every pound of turnips and potatoes saved on Boycott's farm had cost the Government a shilling. The struggle had proved that if his advice were followed

law and authority could be defied and the landlords ruined. "Boycotting" was preached throughout the country, and the doctrine was enforced by the organisation of the Land League. Local Courts were established by the League, and inquiry instituted into the conduct of everyone denounced. If the accused were found guilty of having violated any of the orders of the Land League, the sentence of "boycott" was pronounced against them: and they were ruined. No tenant dared to pay his full rent. No tradesman dared to deal with those against whom the League pronounced its anathema. Shopkeepers who refused to subscribe to the League's funds lost their trade. In three out of the four provinces of Ireland every market was closed against the cattle and produce of landlords, farmers, and agents, who fell under the ban of Mr. Parnell's organisation. No one dared to buy from or to sell to a boycotted victim. The condition of the country was without parallel in the history of civilisation.

This was the condition of things when Mr. Gladstone declared that the first duty of the Ministry was "to protect every citizen in the enjoyment of his life and of his property." It remained the condition of Ireland for nearly six months afterwards. The Cabinet was hopelessly divided. On the one side stood Mr. Bright and those who believed in his dictum that force was no remedy; on the other were Mr. Forster and the members of the Ministry who held that the first duty of a government was to maintain law and order. Between his ardent desire to improve the Irish land laws, and his anxiety to do his duty in protecting innocent citizens, Mr. Gladstone succeeded in doing nothing. He persuaded himself that the success of Mr. Parnell's Campaign was due

to the defects of the land system, that boycotting was the result of intolerable grievances, that peace and prosperity would return the moment he improved the land laws. Events proved he was mistaken.

As boycotting increased, agrarian crime began to diminish. The leaders of the Land League who had formerly abstained from condemning assassination, now discouraged bloodshed. They wielded a force even more terrible than that fear of personal outrage, upon which the Land League had been founded. The cowardly villains who skulked behind hedges and shot men in the back, might miss their victim. But when the Land League ordered the boycott of an individual, escape was impossible. His commercial ruin was inevitable. The labour of a lifetime could be destroyed in an instant. Agrarian crime, formerly the strength of the Land League, had become a source of weakness. Boycotting was more effective and less dangerous. It was a splendid weapon, as one speaker declared, "better than any eighty-ton gun." An address was therefore issued to the Irish people. The Land League disclaimed all connection with outrages, strongly deprecated them, and warned the peasants that violence might defeat the ends of the League by giving an excuse for coercion. Landlordism was now "gasping out its criminal life"; to "consummate its death" it was only necessary to follow the rules and teachings of the League for "resolute combination." Acts of violence against persons decreased; but intimidation by the sending of threatening letters, the digging of graves before the doors of unpopular individuals, the abominable maiming of cattle, and other methods, continued to flourish. To repress the crimes it had fostered was beyond the power of the Land League.

The enormous success of Mr. Parnell's agitation was due to several causes. It was not due, as party writers affirmed, to the iniquity of the Irish Land Laws. Those laws, as Mr. Gladstone admitted, "only differed from the English law in that they were more favourable to the tenant." It was not due, as alleged by Irish agitators, to the iniquitous conduct of the main body of Irish landlords. Mr. Gladstone in his speech on April 7th, 1881, vindicated the Irish landlords as a body from the imputations cast upon them. By a limited number of landlords, mostly absentees, unjust rents had been exacted, and had often been enforced by eviction. But although harsh and unjust landlords were the exception and not the rule, the virtues of the many were eclipsed by the dark deeds of the few. The Parnellites were not concerned in denouncing bad landlords, but *all* landlords. In other words the objects of Mr. Parnell's campaign were not to secure justice for Ireland, the reform of abuses, the concession of rights and liberties, but to destroy the authority of the law, to replace order by anarchy, to drive the landlords as a class out of the country, to hand their property over to the tenants, and to force Great Britain to grant Ireland complete legislative independence. Mr. Parnell and his followers were justly described by Mr. Gladstone as "marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire."

But apart from the difficulties created by the Land League agitation, and the neglect of the Government to maintain law and order, there were grave causes of discontent in Ireland. A succession of bad seasons had produced acute distress. For agriculturists throughout the United Kingdom, 1879 had proved one of the most disastrous years of the century. No rise

in prices compensated farmers for the deficiency of their crops. Owing to the importation of vast supplies from abroad the general level of prices for agricultural products had been steadily declining during these years, which effected the ruin of thousands dependent upon the land. Local causes aggravated the evil in Ireland. On small holdings the margin between prosperity and disaster is a very narrow one. The tenants had few resources to fall back upon. They could not tide over a season of adversity. In most parts of the country there were no industries or manufactures. In three out of the four provinces the middle classes were small in number and insignificant in wealth. There were only the landowners, and the peasantry. In the majority of cases landlords strained every nerve to aid their tenants. But the effects of the efforts of the many were more than counteracted by the indifference or harshness of the few. These were the most potent causes of discontent. There were others of importance. The Land Act of 1870 had proved very defective. It had not secured for tenants the rights it had sought to establish. Passed to redress acute grievances and allay agitation, it had failed to remedy the one, and consequently had stimulated the other. Bad seasons instead of driving the people away from the land, only tended to aggravate the evils arising from the multiplication of ridiculously small holdings. "Land hunger," the irresistible attraction of the soil for the Irish peasant, led to farms barely sufficient to support one family, being split up into still smaller holdings. This was the evil which lay at the root of the Irish land system, and was largely responsible for the poverty of the peasantry, and the acute distress which invariably resulted from bad seasons.

Parliament was assembled on January 7th. In the Queen's Speech the social condition of Ireland was declared to be alarming. Agrarian crimes had multiplied, the administration of justice had been frustrated, an extended system of terror had been established, paralysing alike "the exercise of private rights and the performance of civil duties." To remedy this state of things the Government asked for exceptional powers. The theory that force was no remedy had been abandoned. The Protection of Persons and Property Bill was introduced by Mr. Forster. It provided that specially disturbed districts in Ireland might be proclaimed. Within these areas persons suspected of high treason, treason-felony, treasonable practices, intimidation, inciting to acts calculated to lead to violence and the resistance of the law, might be arrested and detained pending their trial. The exceptional powers conferred upon the Government were only to continue in force till October, 1882. A second measure, the Peace Preservation Bill, which was brought forward on March 2nd, restricted the importation and carrying of arms in Ireland, enabled the houses of suspected persons to be searched for arms between sunrise and sunset, and provided for the summary conviction and imprisonment for not longer than three months of all persons found guilty. It was proposed that these alterations of the law should remain in force for five years.

The proposals of the Government were resisted by the Parnellites by resolute and organised obstruction, and by an extreme abuse of the ample facilities which the rules of the House of Commons afforded to impede legislation. From the beginning of the session the credit and authority of the House were brought into contempt. A resolution moved by Mr.

Gladstone, giving the Irish Bills precedence over the standing orders, was only carried after a continuous sitting of twenty-two hours. The sitting of the House which began on January 30th lasted without intermission for forty-two hours. It was only ended by the resolute action of the Speaker. On resuming the Chair on the morning of February 1st, Mr. Peel declared that the legislative powers of the House were paralysed, and that he was satisfied he should best carry out his duties by declining to call upon any more members to speak, and proceeding at once to put the question. On the following day Mr. Gladstone proposed a resolution vesting large additional powers in the Speaker. An interruption by Mr. Dillon led to his being "named," suspended, and removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Parnell moved that Mr. Gladstone be no longer heard, and, refusing to obey the Speaker, was also suspended. Mr. Finegan continued the interruption with a similar result; and then twenty-eight Irish members were suspended in a body. Five other Irishmen were suspended separately, and the regulations proposed by the Government endowing the Speaker with dictatorial authority over the proceedings of the House, were adopted. During the brief time Mr. Parnell had sat in the House he had done more to discredit the proceedings of Parliament, and to restrict the rights of minorities and the freedom of debate, than the combined action of all members of the House during the previous two hundred years. Until Mr. Parnell was returned for County Meath, there never had been a member of the House whose conduct was not largely regulated by motives of self-respect, and regard for the traditions and forms of the House of Commons. But Mr. Parnell neither respected him-

self nor the assembly of which he was a member. The motives that constrained other men, left him free, the limitations by which other agitators had felt themselves bound, did not exist for him.

On the 7th of April, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Irish Land Bill. It was a highly complicated measure. Its cardinal feature was the creation of a court for the purpose of dealing with all differences between landlord and tenant. Appeal to the Court was optional not compulsory. At first it was proposed that tenants only should have the right of direct access to the judicial tribunal, but the exclusion of the landlords had to be abandoned. The great diversity of conditions under which land was held in Ireland, and the prevalence of local customs which had taken deep root in the country, were cogent reasons for making it optional whether recourse should be had to the Court. Every tenant was given the right to go into the court to have fixed for his holding a "judicial rent," which, when fixed, would endure for fifteen years. During that time there could be no eviction except for specific breach of covenants or non-payment of rent. The landlord was given no power of resumption during that period; his remedy took the form of a compulsory sale of the tenant right. At the conclusion of the statutory term of fifteen years, application might be made to the court for a renewal of tenancy, *toties quoties*. If it were renewed, the conditions as to eviction would remain, but the landlord would have a preemption of the tenant's right if the holder wished to sell. A land Commission was created with power to assist tenants to purchase their holdings, and to purchase estates from willing landlords for the purpose of reselling them, where three-fourths of the tenants were

ready to buy. Three-fourths of the purchase-money was to be advanced by the state, and the tenants were not to be precluded from borrowing the remainder. Advances were also to be made for agricultural improvements, including the reclamation of waste lands, and for the purposes of emigration. No limit was placed on the gross sum to be advanced. Summing up the provisions of the Bill Mr. Gladstone said its general outcome would be that increase of rent would be restrained by certain rules, compensation for disturbance would be regulated according to different rates, the right to sell the tenant's interest would be universally established, evictions would only be permissible for default, and resumption by the landlord would be impossible, except for cause both reasonable and grave, which cause might be brought in question before the Court.

After protracted debates, the Irish Land Bill was passed. The measure did much to aid the settlement of the vexed land question; but it contained many grave defects, and lacked the essence of finality. Two serious defects speedily made themselves felt. The provisions for dealing with arrears of rent were totally inadequate. Large numbers of evictions took place before tenants could obtain relief from the Land Courts. In addition to being costly, the legal machinery created for settling disputes was slow and cumbrous in its working. As the Government had not hesitated to confiscate a considerable part of the property of the landlords, it would have been wise to have gone a step further, and either to have cancelled the arrears of rent, which hung round the necks of thousands of tenants like millstones, or to have prohibited any eviction being carried out for the recovery of arrears, pending the decision of the Land Courts.

Mr. Gladstone's hope that the substantial concessions made by the Act would be accepted by Irish politicians as an earnest of the desire of the Government to deal in a broad and liberal spirit with all real grievances, was doomed to be disappointed. Instead of putting an end to the agitation of the Land League, the generous measure of reform only added fresh fuel to the flames of discontent and disorder. The people were incited to continue the struggle until the entire "English garrison" were driven out of the country, and complete independence was won for Ireland.

During the Land League agitation the Roman Catholic clergy had been divided. By Archbishop McCabe the League had from the first been denounced. But his influence was outweighed by Archbishop Croke, who supported the movement, while most of the priests in the rural districts sided with the agitation. But after the passing of the Land Act the unholy alliance between the Church and the Land League was practically dissolved. The heads of the Roman Catholic Church were not prepared to endorse the action of the Parnellites in trying to prevent tenants taking advantage of the new law. Though the Catholic Church in Ireland has done many things which even its best friends must deplore, its influence on the whole has been on the side of law and order. It is a wholesome and conservative force, not a revolutionary and destructive one.

Considering the intolerable condition of Ireland, the large powers conferred upon the Government by the Coercion Acts, had been used with great moderation. Only 192 "suspects" were detained in prison at the end of August. Mr. Dillon was the only member of Parliament who had been arrested. But before

Parliament rose he had been liberated, and as far as possible, the Government had avoided all action that would unnecessarily embitter feeling or inflame passion. Most of the men incarcerated thoroughly deserved Mr. Forster's description of them as "contemptible, dissolute ruffians and blackguards." Many districts had been proclaimed, illegal agitation had been repressed, but the liberty of speech and of the individual had not been unduly restricted. The existence of extensive Fenian conspiracies, fomented and supported by money from America, the necessity of protecting life and property, had rendered an extensive use of the exceptional powers granted by Parliament, unavoidable. But during the consideration of the Land Bill the Government had striven not to do anything which would prevent that measure being accepted as a generous attempt to settle the grievances of the Irish peasantry. This moderation was not without good effect. It did much to conciliate the Roman Catholic clergy, and the more intelligent class of tenants. But moderation and conciliation were wasted upon Mr. Parnell and his followers. Their object was not to redress Irish grievances, but to foment them.

No sooner had the Land Act been added to the Statute Book, than it was denounced by the Land League as a sham, "a mere paltry mitigation of the horrors of landlordism." Mr. Parnell urged the tenants not to apply to the Land Courts, and not to avail themselves of any of the provisions of the Act, except the clauses relating to borrowing money. He promised that the true nature of the Act would be revealed by submitting to the Courts test cases from estates in different parts of Ireland. These would be fought at the expense of the Land League, and

tenants were warned by resolutions of the League against paying any rent, or taking any action until those test cases had been decided. In other words a conspiracy had been organised to defeat the law, and wreck the Land Act.

Mr. Gladstone, in a memorable speech delivered at Leeds, on October 7th, warned Mr. Parnell that the resources of civilisation had not yet been exhausted. He declared that by his action Mr. Parnell had shown a desire "to stand as Aaron stood, between the living and the dead, but to stand there, not as Aaron had stood to arrest, but to spread the plague." The true object of the leader of the Land League and his myrmidons was to prevent peace being restored to Ireland. They were not ashamed to preach the doctrines of public plunder. Mr. Parnell had said that whereas the rental of Ireland was seventeen millions of money, the landlords were entitled to nothing but the original value of the land before a spade was put into it, which would not amount to more than three millions. Was not that the promulgation of the gospel of sheer plunder? A handful of Irishmen were not ashamed to advocate how the power of England might by secret treachery be destroyed; how British ships might be blown up, and those who resisted Irish demands be removed by the knife of the assassin. To re-read by the light of subsequent events this speech in which Mr. Gladstone passionately denounced "the sheer lawlessness" of Mr. Parnell and his followers, is a curious experience. Truth is stranger than fiction. In the pages of Lewis Carroll, in the topsy-turvy realm of Mr. Gilbert's imagination, is there anything more absurd, more ludicrously improbable than that an English statesman of commanding genius, of lofty and noble char-

acter, should within a comparatively few months become the ally, the supporter, almost the friend, of the unscrupulous, and utterly selfish agitator whom he had solemnly denounced, and whom he was about to thrust into prison?

On October 13th, Mr. Parnell was arrested. The Land League was suppressed as an illegal organisation, and Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien, and others of its officials were sent to join their leader in his enforced retirement. A violent and treasonable manifesto was issued by the imprisoned agitators calling upon the people not to pay a penny of rent, to destroy landlordism, and to stand by the League which had proved too strong for English despotism. The No-rent Manifesto fell rather flat. It was condemned by Archbishop Croke, the most influential of the Catholic prelates, who advised the people not to reject the benefits of the Land Act. Though the payment of rent was to a great extent withheld in many districts, tenants readily took advantage of the Land Courts. Before the end of November over 70,000 cases had been entered for trial. Sufficient work had been provided to keep the Land Commissioners and their assistants busy for years to come. Instead of having nothing to do, the Courts became hopelessly congested. Of the decisions delivered, over sixty per cent were appealed against, and landlords and tenants were plunged into ruinous litigation, from which they were only rescued in later years by further legislation.

The reign of terror in Ireland had largely been promoted from the United States. Fenian organisations, whose avowed objects were outrage and assassination, had been formed in New York and Chicago, and large sums were contributed by the disaffected

Irish and anarchists of all nationalities in America, to carry out dynamite explosions, murders, and other acts of violence. In certain newspapers published in the United States incitements to outrage and intimidation were advocated with impunity. Representations to the Government at Washington led to no result. A dynamite explosion at Salford was attended with fatal results; attempts were made to blow up the Mansion House in London, the barracks at Chester and Edinburgh, to destroy the Liverpool Town Hall and police barracks, and by means of infernal machines to sink British steamers in their passage across the Atlantic. These and a score of other outrages were planned and perpetrated by miscreants hired and despatched from the United States for the purpose.

Apart from the storm and stress of its political events, the year 1881 will long be remembered by the death, on April the 19th, of Lord Beaconsfield, at the age of seventy-six. In him there passed away a great and beneficent force from political life. With much of his policy we may not agree. But time has tended rather to increase than to diminish his reputation as a far-sighted, sagacious, and patriotic statesman. In many respects he was in advance of his time. As early as 1872, when Imperial Federation had almost been unheard of, and was regarded as an idle dream, Mr. Disraeli looked forward to the reconstruction of the Empire, and to the necessity of responding "to those distant sympathies that may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to our land." He realised that some day a great policy of Imperial consolidation would spring up, and that a representative council would be established in London to bring "the Colonies into constant

and continuous relations with the home Government.”* At the dawn of the new century these words sound like a prophecy. No other British statesman of the century grasped so fully what the Empire meant. In its destinies he had a profound belief, and did not shrink from facing the responsibilities involved. It has been justly said that “the underlying motive of his speculations was the need which he felt of closer bonds of social interdependence, such as those which the great revolution had unloosed.” He taught the privileged classes of Great Britain to take a larger and less selfish view of questions affecting their own interests. Under circumstances that might well have daunted even his high courage, he created a new party, led it to victory, and left it a united and powerful organisation. Though imperial rather than democratic in his sympathies he never lost touch with the needs and aspirations of the people. His counsels were always marked by moderation and sound judgment. Few Parliamentary leaders were ever so brilliant and so safe. He had nothing of the volcanic energy which rendered Mr. Gladstone so destructive and constructive a force in politics. But he had a sagacity, a sound and steady judgment, a fine insight into the character and motives of men, which were denied his great political opponent. While Mr. Gladstone made the deeper impression upon the social and political history of the United Kingdom, Lord Beaconsfield’s services to the Empire will probably be remembered when posterity has forgotten many of the smaller questions which consumed Mr. Gladstone’s existence. In the history of political progress Mr.

*Mr. Disraeli at the Crystal Palace in 1872.

Disraeli was essentially a regenerating but conservative and constructive force. He had the genius to discern the inherent vitality of historic institutions, and to re-awaken the feelings of all classes for the improvement and protection of all that was best worth preservation. Future generations will probably confirm the verdict that he was a man who worthily sustained a great part, and accomplished much in parliamentary and national life which deserves to be held in grateful remembrance.

The session of 1882 opened amid high hopes. The previous year had been exclusively devoted to Irish questions. Large arrears of legislation were now to be overtaken. But the months that might have been fruitful of reform were destined to bring forth very different results. Three Acts of importance were, however, added to the Statute Book. The provisions of old-age annuities, and life insurance were added to the duties of the Post Office Savings Bank. On the initiative of Lord Cairns, the Lord Chancellor under the recent Conservative Government, a reform which had been long demanded, was carried out. A large amount of the land was held under entail, which could only be broken by the consent of the tenant-for-life and the next two heirs. By the Settled Land Act owners who have only a life interest in estates were enabled to sell. The money arising from the sale is invested under the control of the trustees of the settlement, or of the Court, whose duty it is to see that the interest of the heirs is not impaired. After many delays married women were at last granted protection for their property. Under the common law, a woman's personal and real estate became upon marriage the property of her husband. This, in a large number of cases, resulted in abuses

and hardships. By the Married Women's Property Act all property, of whatever kind, bequeathed to a married woman, or acquired by her own efforts, was placed beyond the control of the husband, and secured to her absolutely as though she were single.

The abuse of the Rules of Procedure in the House of Commons necessitated drastic reform. Public business had been paralysed, legislation well-nigh rendered impossible, by the obstructive tactics developed under the leadership of Mr. Parnell. It was imperative that the House should regain authority over its own debates. The chief interest centered in the first of the new rules, which provided for the *clôture* by a bare majority. More than once it seemed likely that this proposal, so opposed to the principles and traditions of British parliamentary procedure, would lead to the defeat of the Ministry. It was only after long and weary debates that the resolutions of the Government were at last carried. If the proposals erred it was on the side of weakness, and future governments found it necessary to render the rules more stringent and effectual.

In Ireland the policy of the Government had been attended with only a limited measure of success. Though the Land League had been suppressed and its offices seized, it was still a formidable organisation. Boycotting had been curtailed, law and order had been partly restored, but outrages were still numerous, and intimidation flourished. Though the exceptional powers granted to the Government were adequate, the provisions for enforcing them were far from being satisfactory. In view of the enormous difficulties to which the working of the Land Act had given rise, further legislation was imperative. A proposal urged by Mr. W. H. Smith, that all

Irish tenants should by the aid of the State be enabled to purchase their holdings at a fair and just price from the landlords, was not entertained at the time; but it was subsequently embodied in a measure which proved of great value in settling the Irish Land question, by turning a disaffected peasantry into citizens interested in the peace of the country in which they have a material stake. The question of arrears of rent was one of great urgency. The discussion upon a bill introduced by Mr. Redmond showed that until this defect of the Land Act was remedied the peace of Ireland could not be secured. From Mr. Gladstone's speech in discussing the bill, it was evident that the Government recognised the necessity of action; while the marked satisfaction with which the vague and guarded words of the Prime Minister were received by the Irish members, aroused a general suspicion that events were in progress of which the public had no knowledge. A few days later the resignation was announced of the Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Cowper, who was promptly replaced by Earl Spencer. Mr. Forster, who refused to accept the new departure upon which Mr. Gladstone had suddenly determined, ceased to be a member of the Government. On the following day, May 2nd, Mr. Gladstone announced that Messrs. Parnell, Dillon, and O'Kelly, the three members of Parliament under arrest, had been liberated without conditions or stipulations; that all other "suspects" not directly implicated in crime would be discharged; that the Protection of Persons and Property Act would not be renewed; and that the Government intended to take counsel with the Irish representatives on the amendment of the Land Act.

The statement that Mr. Parnell and the other two

members had been released without conditions gave rise to a bitter controversy. Mr. Gladstone admitted that the ground of the release was information received by the Government that if the question of arrears were settled, the Land League members would "arrange themselves on the side of law and order." But he denied that there was any arrangement between Mr. Parnell and the Government. Mr. Forster gave a very different view of the transaction. He accused his late colleagues of having bought obedience and made blackmail arrangements with law-breakers. Mr. Parnell's version of the story conflicted in certain essential details with the statement made by Mr. Gladstone. A demand was made that the letters which constituted the so-called "Treaty of Kilmainham," between members of the Government and Mr. Parnell, should be produced. Mr. Gladstone held that the correspondence could not be officially circulated, and reiterated his denial of the existence of any "recognised or implied contract" between the Government and the leader of the Home Rule party. Mr. Parnell volunteered to furnish the evidence needed, to show what had been the attitude of the imprisoned members. It came out that the intermedium between Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Parnell, had been Captain O'Shea. The accuracy of the wording of the concluding paragraph of his letter which Mr. Parnell read to the House was challenged by Mr. Forster, who produced a correct copy of the document. A very material omission had been made, the blame for which Mr. Parnell saddled upon O'Shea. In his letter Mr. Parnell stated that if the question of arrears of rent were dealt with, and the Land Act amended in certain particulars, these changes would be "re-

garded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, *and would, I feel sure, enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles*, and that the Government at the end of the session would, from the state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with future coercive measures." The words placed in italics were those which had been omitted from the copy of the letter which Mr. Parnell read to the House. But this was not the only evidence that the Government were willing to ally themselves with the men who had originated boycotting, and created a reign of terror in Ireland. O'Shea, after conferences with Mr. Parnell, had sought an interview with Mr. Forster, had shown him the letter from which we have quoted, remarking that "he hoped it would be a satisfactory expression of union with the Liberal party." In reply, Mr. Forster said, "It comes to this—that upon our doing certain things he will help us to prevent outrages." O'Shea urged that if the wording of Mr. Parnell's letter was not satisfactory it could be altered. "What is obtained is that the conspiracy which has been used to get up boycotting and outrages, will now be used to put them down, and that there will be a union in the Liberal party." Entirely misunderstanding the effect such proposals would make upon the mind of Mr. Forster, O'Shea went on to explain that Mr. Parnell hoped to aid the Government by employing a certain person, who was then abroad, to put down conspiracy or agitation, as "he knew all its details in the West." The certain person was the notorious scoundrel Sheridan, for whose arrest Mr. Forster had issued a warrant. These confidences, which Mr. Forster regarded with abhor-

rence, were entertained by the other members of the Government. Mr. Parnell's compact was accepted. Mr. Forster resigned. The new policy was inaugurated; but the disclosures shook the confidence of many supporters of the Government.

Mr. Gladstone's new message of peace and the release of the Parnellites was announced on May 2nd. Four days later Lord Frederick Cavendish, the successor to Mr. Forster in the Chief Secretaryship, and Mr. T. H. Burke, the permanent Under-Secretary for Ireland, were murdered as they were walking through the Phoenix Park, in Dublin. This terrible and savage crime sent a thrill of horror throughout the civilised world. It was not more brutal than the assassinations of Mrs. Smythe and Mr. Herbert, which had taken place a short time before. But the official position of the victims, and the circumstances under which the crime was committed, brought home to the Government and to the people the desperate character of the revolutionary forces at work in Ireland. Mr. George Trevelyan became Chief Secretary. A bill of a very stringent nature for the prevention of crime was introduced by Sir William Harcourt. Its provisions were specially directed against secret societies and illegal combinations. Trial by jury was suspended in certain cases; the conditions under which trials were held were varied to ensure the conviction of guilty persons; intimidation, boycotting, secret conspiracies, and illegal assemblies, were defined as criminal offences. The Alien Act was revived, and the power to expel suspicious foreigners was extended to Great Britain.

It was hoped that as the Parnellites had expressed horror of the Phoenix Park murders, which were said to be the work of American conspirators, the Pre-

vention of Crimes Bill would not be seriously opposed. The measure, as Mr. Bright urged, was one that would harm no innocent man. It was only the guilty who would stand in fear of it. The famous doctrine that "Force is no remedy," Mr. Bright now explained was intended to apply not to outrages, but to grievances. It was a pity that Mr. Bright had not originally explained himself more clearly: a very different construction from that now attached to them, had been placed upon his words. But from the day of its introduction the Prevention of Crimes Bill was resisted by Mr. Parnell and his followers by every means in their power. The most strenuous opposition was offered to the suspension of trial by jury, to the clauses that struck at intimidation, and to a provision that charged compensation upon districts where crimes of murder and maiming were not detected. The wisdom of this last provision was very doubtful, and its resistance by the Irish Members was not unwarranted. After weeks of obstruction Mr. Gladstone declared the time had come when action must be taken. On the 29th of June the House sat continuously for twenty-eight hours. Mr. Parnell and fifteen of his followers were suspended for systematic obstruction, and later nine other Irish members were ordered to withdraw from the House. On the 12th of July the Bill, which was to remain in force for three years, became law.

The passing of the measure dealing with the question of arrears of rent owing by Irish tenants, was the only other work of the session, which was described by Mr. Gladstone as one of "ruin and discomfiture." The Arrears Bill went even further than the demands made by the Parnellites. It contained features which Mr. Gladstone admitted could not be

justified on either economic or constitutional principles. The relief afforded tenants was to be in the nature of a gift instead of a loan;—a demoralising proposal which was without precedent, and was scarcely justified by the condition of the poor cottiers for whose benefit the Bill was especially framed. But apart from these objectionable features the measure was a valuable one. Some 136,000 Irish tenants availed themselves of the advantages it conferred, at a cost of about two and a half millions, two-thirds of which were obtained from the Irish Church surplus, the balance being supplied by the State.

Following the passing of the Arrears Bill and the measures conferring such large powers upon the Government, a great change took place in the condition of Ireland. Crimes, boycotting, intimidation in every form, rapidly diminished. During the last six months of 1882 the number of outrages of all kinds, exclusive of threatening letters, had fallen to 365 as compared with 1,010 in the first half of the year. In 1883 the improvement in the state of the country continued. For the first time since the Liberal Government had come into office, the Queen's writs could run again in Ireland. On the whole the Executive used the extensive and arbitrary powers placed in their hands with moderation and discretion. That mistakes should be made was inevitable.

The exceptional powers granted by Parliament enabled the Irish Executive to unravel a number of dangerous criminal conspiracies, to unmask the perpetrators of agrarian and political murders, and to vindicate the law by the punishment of many of the guilty persons. On January 13th and 15th the police, who had long been carefully maturing their plans, arrested twenty men in Dublin on charges of

being concerned in an attempt that had been made to murder Mr. Justice Lawson and Mr. Field, and in the assassination of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. All the prisoners were young men, and belonged to the humbler classes. One of them, James Carey was a well-to-do tradesman, and a member of the Dublin Town Council. Astounding revelations followed. It was proved that the Fenian organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, had a mysterious inner circle known as the Invincibles. Formed of picked men chosen from the larger society, the Invincibles, some 250 in number, were alleged to be scattered throughout the United Kingdom. The object of the Society was "to remove all tyrants from the country." In November, 1881, Carey, who was a director of the larger Fenian organisation, was introduced by McCaffery, another of the prisoners, to a man named Walsh, who said he had come to Ireland to found a branch of a secret society which was "to make history." A centre was formed for Dublin, and McCaffery, Carey, James Mullet, and Daniel Curley, were sworn in as its first members and chiefs. Some twenty-five other members joined. The oath was to obey orders, without inquiring more than was necessary to understand them, on pain of death. "No. 1," who was afterwards identified with a man named Tynan, Frank Byrne, secretary of an English branch of the Land League, and P. J. Sheridan, a prominent member of the Land League, who went about disguised as a priest,—the man whose assistance Messrs. Parnell and O'Shea had urged the British Government to accept during the Kilmainham negotiations,—were among the head officials of the Invincibles, and issued weapons, money, and orders to their Irish confederates. The first persons

to be murdered were Earl Cowper, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Burke. Many plans were arranged for the assassination of Mr. Forster, and only failed through a succession of chances. His escapes were almost miraculous.

After the resignation of Mr. Forster and Lord Cowper, unharmed, "No. 1" urged forward "the removal" of Mr. Burke. The plan was arranged by Carey, who gave the signal when the deed was to be done in the Phoenix Park. Curley carried out the general arrangements. A man named Fitzharris, *alias* "Skin the Goat," drove the four murderers, Joseph Brady, Timothy Kelly, Thomas Caffery, and Patrick Delaney, into the Park, waited for them, and drove them away. It was only intended to kill Mr. Burke. The assassins did not even know who his companion was; but when Lord Frederick Cavendish interfered to try to save Mr. Burke, he was stabbed by Brady. Delaney had already been sentenced to ten years' penal servitude for the attempt to murder Mr. Justice Lawson. Seven of the prisoners turned informers, including James Carey. The others were found guilty. Brady, Kelly, Caffery, Curley and Fagan were sentenced to death, and were hanged. A sentence of death passed on Patrick Delaney was commuted to one of penal servitude for life, to which Fitzharris and Joseph Mullet were also sentenced. James Mullet, Daniel Delaney, McCaffery, O'Brien and Moroney, were sent to prison for ten, and Doyle for five years. True bills for murder were returned against Tynan ("No. 1") P. J. Sheridan, and Walsh, who had fled to the United States.

Of all the prisoners, Carey, who had turned Queen's evidence, was unquestionably the most guilty. His evidence and his unsuccessful attempts

to connect the heads of the Land League with the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the Invincibles, aroused great indignation against him. It was well known that if he were released in Ireland he would be assassinated. After keeping him for some time in prison, the authorities secretly put him, with his wife and seven children, on board a steamer at Dartmouth bound for Cape Town. The family went under the name of Power. On the same steamer was Patrick O'Donnell, a Californian miner, believed to be a member of one of the Fenian Societies. Whether Carey had been shadowed in spite of the precautions of the authorities is doubtful. O'Donnell cultivated the acquaintance of Power, and soon became convinced that he was the notorious informer Carey. At Cape Town the men changed to another steamer for Natal. On July 29th when nearing that port, O'Donnell suddenly charged Power with being Carey, and drawing a revolver fired three shots. Within half an hour Carey died in the arms of his wife who had been present when her husband was shot. O'Donnell was brought back to England, convicted, and hanged.

Another extensive conspiracy to murder was brought to light at Belfast, and twelve men were sentenced to periods of from five to ten years' penal servitude. Many other perpetrators of outrages were arrested and punished, including three men who had first assassinated Lord Ardilaun's bailiff at Lough Mask, and afterwards had murdered a whole family who were suspected of having identified them with the crime. In Great Britain renewed attempts were made to blow up public buildings. Five persons were injured by an explosion at Glasgow; and endeavours were made to wreck the offices of the

Local Government Board in London, and of *The Times* newspaper. Fortunately the police succeeded in tracking the authors of these plots. Of the men tried for treason-felony in June, four, named Thomas Gallagher, Henry Wilson, John Curtin, and Whitehead, who manufactured the explosives in Birmingham, were sentenced to hard labour for life. Gallagher when arrested had over £900 in English and American money upon him. It was proved that all the dynamite outrages had been carried out at the order of, and with money furnished by, a secret society in New York.

A movement to raise in Ireland a testimonial fund to Mr. Parnell led to two important results. It proved what a very strong hold the head of the Irish party had upon a large portion of the people, and it brought the Irish Catholics into direct collision with the Papal authority. Among the earlier subscribers to the fund was Archbishop Croke, whose action was followed by a large number of priests. As he had supported the Land League in the early years of its existence, so Archbishop Croke had now extended his approval to the National League, which had been founded to take the place of the organisation which the Government had suppressed. More than once the Vatican had expressed vaguely worded disapproval of the active part several of the Irish prelates, and many of their priests, were taking in political agitation. Archbishop Croke was now summoned to Rome, and was severely rebuked for the part he had played. A letter signed on behalf of the Pope by Cardinal Simeoni, and Monsignor Jacobini, was addressed to the Irish bishops discountenancing the projected tribute to Mr. Parnell. But the thunder of the Papal rescript was ignored. The action of the

Pope was put down as the result of misleading representations made to him by Mr. Errington, who for some years had constituted himself a kind of unofficial diplomatic agent between the Vatican and the British Government, much to the annoyance of the Irish Nationalists. Instead of being received with respect and obedience, the Papal rescript met with defiance and denunciation from many unexpected quarters, and tended rather to promote than extinguish the tribute to Mr. Parnell. When the fund was closed it amounted to £38,000. This, and a seat won by Mr. Healy in County Monaghan, greatly strengthened the position of Mr. Parnell, who in a speech at the close of the year gave the Government to understand that at the next general election he would be master of the situation. If coercion was to be continued, he said, it should be by a Tory not by a Liberal Government. "Beyond a shadow of doubt it will be for the Irish people in England, and for your independent Irish members, to determine at the next election whether a Tory or a Liberal English Ministry shall rule England. This is a great force and a great power. If we cannot rule ourselves we can at least cause them to be ruled as we choose." No more uncompromising defiance was ever flung in the face of a nation or of a Government. There was one statesman at least upon whom Mr. Parnell's words had a great effect. From this time Mr. Gladstone began to look upon the demand for Home Rule with less critical eyes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REFORM BILL OF 1884.

RELEASED from the necessity of passing measures fiercely opposed by the Parnellites, the Government during 1883 were able to carry several bills of importance to political progress. Of these the Act against Corrupt Practices at Elections was the chief. An exhaustive inquiry by the Election Commissioners of 1881 had shown that in spite of the Ballot, and of the provisions of several Acts that had been passed against bribery, a large amount of corruption continued to exist.

At Canterbury, the Commissioners found that although the constituency as a whole was not corrupt, six hundred voters were accessible to bribery, some of whom held municipal offices while others were justices of the peace. The verdict on Knaresborough was that treating had been sanctioned by both parties with undue lavishness. At Boston, corrupt practices were declared to have extensively prevailed; and one of the candidates, two solicitors, and others were scheduled as guilty of bribery. The state of affairs at Sandwich was far worse. At a bye-election in May, 1880, both direct and indirect bribery had been extensively and systematically indulged in. In Chester the Commissioners reported that corrupt practices had marked the elections of 1874 and 1880. Over a hundred persons were scheduled as guilty of bribery, including the mayor, four aldermen, and

eight town-councillors. No less than 2,872 persons were returned as having been guilty of corruption at Macclesfield. At Gloucester, 1,916 electors admitted having received in 1880 bribes to the amount of £2,500, and it was found that bribery was the rule and not the exception at all elections in the city. The Commissioners on the Oxford election reported that over a thousand electors were open to corrupt influences. Putting aside the returning officer's charges, about £7,500 was spent in the April election, and upwards of £11,000 in the May election, in a constituency numbering 6,166 electors. In spite of the stringency of some of the reports of the Commissioners, very few prosecutions followed, and by far the larger portion of those who were committed for bribery were acquitted. But the parliamentary representation of Oxford, Gloucester, Chester, Macclesfield, Sandwich, and Wigan, was temporarily suspended.

It was evident that drastic methods for dealing with corruption and other offences were needed. They were provided by the Government Bill. A candidate found guilty of corruption was disqualified for sitting in Parliament, voting, holding any office for seven years, or for ever representing the constituency in which the offence was committed. Bribery, treating, and undue influence, were made misdemeanours, for which the penalty was not to exceed a year's imprisonment. Personation was declared a felony. The amount which any candidate might spend upon an election was regulated in accordance with the size and character of the constituency. At the trial of every election petition the Director of Public Prosecutions, or his representative, was to appear, and to take directions from the Court respect-

ing the prosecution of offenders. Stringent formalities were imposed upon persons desirous of withdrawing an election petition, and a corrupt agreement to withdraw was made a misdemeanour. Even where no petition had been presented, the Director of Public Prosecutions was bound on receiving information of corrupt practices to make inquiries, and, if necessary, institute prosecutions. The number of paid assistants and committee rooms was strictly limited. No conveyances were to be hired. A variety of unnecessary payments were declared illegal. The breach of any one of these, among other provisions, constituted an "illegal" as distinct from a "corrupt" practice. Illegal payment, employment, hiring, &c., if committed personally by a candidate or his agent, amounted to illegal practices. All claims were to be paid through one election agent, by whom a sworn return of the election expenses was to be made within a limited time. A violation of these rules amounted to a corrupt practice, and vacated the seat. It was estimated that the Act would reduce the cost of a General Election from some two and a half millions to £800,000. An effort made by Mr. Broadhurst to have the cost of Parliamentary elections defrayed out of the rates was opposed by Mr. Gladstone and defeated.

Another measure of importance was the Agricultural Holdings Bill, which secured English tenants compensation, on the termination of their tenancies, for all improvements. The amount of compensation was to be determined by the value of the improvements to an incoming tenant. Temporary improvements could be carried out at the discretion of the tenant, but for those of a permanent character the consent of the landlord was required. An amend-

ment, introduced by the House of Lords, excluding from the value of improvements to be assessed whatever was due to "the inherent qualities of the soil," was accepted, and the Bill became law. Though not a great measure, the Act rectified a number of pressing grievances, and went quite as far as the conditions warranted.

On the whole the relations between landlords and tenants in England have been singularly happy. It says much for the landed classes that so little friction should have arisen during the period of severe depression and fall in prices which began in 1874. The sacrifices made by the majority of landlords were quite as great as those tenants were called upon to bear; and the liberal spirit in which aid was extended to farmers by the owners of the soil, prevented the growth of disaffection, and preserved the kindly feeling which has long existed between landlord and tenant. At the dawn of the new century there are no signs that the confiscatory land legislation which has been applied to Ireland will ever become necessary in England.

But while English farmers have little, that could be remedied by Parliament, to complain of, the state of the agricultural labourers is much more unsatisfactory. During the last quarter of the century, the rural districts have been largely depopulated. The deplorable conditions under which the mass of the people exist have driven away from the land the best specimens of the finest peasantry in the world. A great deterioration has consequently taken place in the quality of agricultural labour. The majority of young men of fine physique, energy, and ability, instead of following the occupation of their fathers, have been forced to seek in the ever grow-

ing towns, and in other parts of the world, the decent means of livelihood denied them in the rural districts where they were born. It is impossible to view this without apprehension. Sooner or later a reform of the English land laws will become necessary, if the people are to be attached to the soil. To accomplish that end, a great improvement must be effected in the material surroundings and prospects of the agricultural labourer. At present, the most he can hope to win, by unremitting industry and economy, is a bare living for himself and those dependent upon him. In only too many cases, he is poorly fed, badly housed, and absolutely cut off from any chance of bettering his condition. What wonder that the first object of his children is to escape from the depressing surroundings, the hopeless occupation of a life that offers all the penalties and none of the rewards of existence.

The session of 1883 also witnessed the passing of a Bill prohibiting the payment of wages in public-houses, and a greatly needed reform of the law dealing with patents. Through the efforts of Mr. Chamberlain, a large measure, amending the very defective provisions of the laws of bankruptcy, was added to the Statute Book. By the Bankruptcy Act, the powers previously exercised by a Judge were transferred to the Board of Trade, and a commercial was substituted for a legal supervision over the affairs of a debtor. Under the old law, fraudulent, or careless trustees flourished; bankruptcy afforded dishonest traders scandalous facilities for cheating their creditors; the regulations governing liquidations by arrangement, and compositions, constituted a premium upon fraud. All this was changed by the Act of 1883. Insolvent estates were to be thrown into

bankruptcy. The debtor might still present a petition, but the moment he did so, the control of his affairs passed into the hands of an official receiver. No composition of less than five shillings in the pound was permitted; the bankrupt could only obtain his discharge under stringent conditions; the amount of remuneration trustees might charge was restricted, and an official audit was provided for their accounts. With slight amendments, Mr. Chamberlain's Act has worked well, and is at once a terror to fraudulent bankrupts, and a means of honourable acquittal for the victims of misfortune.

To meet the distress which continued in parts of Ireland, Bills were passed to encourage fisheries on the Irish coasts; to provide for the construction of tramways and light railways, and to assist emigration. At the instigation of the Irish members, half of the amount to be devoted to furthering emigration was diverted to the much more desirable object of enabling inhabitants of congested districts to migrate and establish themselves in thinly populated parts of Ireland. A useful measure, brought in by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, enabled rural sanitary authorities to provide dwellings for labourers by means of loans from the Government.

Events at home and abroad had weakened the position of the Government. One of the few questions upon which Liberals were united was a demand for the assimilation of the country to the borough franchise. The Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867 had extended the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, only to a section of the people. At the time those Acts were passed, many of the persons excluded were not qualified to be entrusted with political power. But the spread of education, the great en-

lightenment of the people which had resulted from the growth of a free press, rendered it imperative that something should be done to remedy the defects of previous legislation, and remove the glaring inequalities which existed in the system of representation. The necessity for a redistribution of seats was even greater than for an extension of the franchise to the inhabitants of the rural districts. It was urged with much truth, that the nation was being governed by a small minority of the population, a minority of the voters, and a minority of the taxpayers. The anomalies that existed in Staffordshire may be cited as an illustration of what existed throughout the country. Four boroughs with a population of sixty thousand, and an income estimated for the purposes of taxation at £643,000, returned seven members; while in the same county four other boroughs, with a population of half a million, and an income of nearly four and three-quarter millions, only sent six members to Parliament. Elsewhere, certain constituencies, with a population of only a quarter of a million, were represented by forty members in the House of Commons, while another forty members represented more than six millions and a quarter.

By the Conservatives, the demand for reform was viewed with dislike and apprehension. Lord Randolph Churchill, whose leanings to democracy were in marked contrast with the attitude of the majority of his party, declared, at the close of 1883, that the proposal to enfranchise the agricultural labourer was "premature, inexpedient, unnatural, and therefore highly dangerous," and added that the demand for redistribution, which was only another name for depriving the smaller boroughs of their representation, was unneeded, uncalled for, and unjust.

The Liberals, although united in demanding electoral reform and a redistribution of seats, were divided upon the principles which should govern the framing of further legislation. Mr. John Morley and others were in favour of the one-man-one-vote theory: more extreme Radicals demanded universal suffrage; Lord Hartington dreaded any extension of the suffrage in Ireland, which would increase "the numerical strength and political power of the Irreconcilables": Mr. Chamberlain argued for the right of Ireland to a full share in the proposed electoral reform. Mr. Bright, the great champion of liberty, was directly opposed to the demands of the Radicals. He urged that the English constitution was not based on, and never aimed at, the principle of universal suffrage, and that the object of every reformer, who was not at heart a revolutionist, should be to enlarge as far as possible the existing basis of the Constitution, and not to substitute some alien foundation. While the campaign in favour of reform was being carried on throughout the country with great vigour by his followers, Mr. Gladstone created no little surprise and dismay by seizing the first opportunity of ridiculing newspaper statements as to the intentions of the Cabinet, and adding that he doubted as much the policy of being too soon, as of being too late in the determination of legislative measures.

Whatever Mr. Gladstone may have meant by this ambiguous pronouncement, it soon became clear that the extension of the franchise would occupy the attention of Parliament during 1884. There was an irresistible demand throughout the country for reform. Recognising the change in public opinion the Conservatives greatly modified their views. They took their stand upon new ground, declaring that

while an extension of the franchise was desirable, it would only be acceptable if accompanied by a satisfactory scheme of redistribution. As the advisability of separating the Franchise Bill from the Redistribution Bill had been insisted upon by all Liberal leaders, the new session promised to be a stormy one. The expectation was amply fulfilled. On the last day of February, Mr. Gladstone introduced the Franchise Bill in the House of Commons, and announced the refusal of the Government to deal with redistribution in the same measure, on the ground that it was impossible for Parliament to discuss the whole question in a single session. He insisted upon the extension of the franchise being granted to Ireland as well as to England and Scotland, and gave a vague outline of the features of the measure for the redistribution of seats, which was promised for the following year. The representation of Scotland would be enlarged, that of Ireland would not be decreased; the distinction between borough and county districts would be maintained, and the reapportionment would stop short of equal electoral divisions.

The Franchise Bill proved to be a large and liberal measure of reform, though it did not go as far as many of the extreme supporters of the Government had hoped. In the main, the existing rights of the franchise were not touched. Only a slight effort was made to check fagot votes; i. e. votes conferred by the possession of small pieces of landed property acquired in different parts of the country with the object of securing a vote for the owners. As the property qualification does not carry with it any condition as regards residence, a small number of persons possess from two to twenty votes in as many constituencies; and as a general election is not held on one

day, but is allowed to drag on for some weeks, property owners have every facility for recording their votes in different places. But the number of electors with more than one vote is infinitesimal, and Mr. Gladstone was probably well advised in not adding to the difficulties of the Government by assailing the property qualification. The Bill enlarged the £10 occupation franchise in boroughs, so as to make it include land without buildings, and created a service franchise conferring the vote upon persons occupying tenements, in virtue of some office or appointment, without paying any rent. Thus modified and enlarged, the borough franchise was extended to the counties, and the invidious distinction between the political rights of persons in rural and urban districts, was swept away. The reform was the most far reaching of the century. By the Magna Charta of British liberties, as the Reform Act of 1832 was termed, less than half a million voters were added to the electorate. In 1866 the total constituency of the United Kingdom had reached 1,364,000. That number was raised to 2,448,000 by the Bills passed between 1867 and 1869. In 1884 the number of voters had only increased to three million. By the extension of the franchise to the counties over two and a half million voters were added to the electorate. Of these 1,778,000 were in English, 262,000 in Scotch, and 517,000 in Irish constituencies.

Though the Conservatives did not denounce the Franchise Bill, they were anything but eager for its adoption. Speaking on behalf of his party, Lord Salisbury denied that the Government had received any mandate from the country at the last election to deal with the question, and challenged the Ministry to "appeal to the people." The tone of other speak-

ers was less hostile, but there was a strong protest, supported by many moderate men, against the separation of redistribution from the franchise question. To the course adopted by the Government there were three overwhelming objections, and whatever may have been the motives which inspired the Opposition, they would unquestionably have failed in their duty to the State if they had not entered a vigorous protest against the action of ministers in withholding from Parliament all knowledge of the policy by which they would be guided in dealing with the redistribution of seats. If the Franchise Bill were passed without any effective guarantee as to what would follow, an appeal to the country might have taken place upon the new and enlarged register before any redistribution scheme was introduced. If that absurdity were escaped, the Government might have introduced a scheme of redistribution which would have given undue advantage to certain parts of the country over others, and the scheme foreshadowed by Mr. Gladstone lent colour to the suggestion that the Government had some ulterior object in refusing to disclose even the principles upon which their Redistribution Bill would be based. Thirdly, it was obvious that if the Franchise Bill were passed, the Opposition in discussing any scheme of redistribution would have a rope round its neck. A rejection of the Redistribution Bill, however objectionable it might prove, would enable the Government to appeal to the new electorate upon the lines of the old division of seats. Unless it was the deliberate intention of the extreme members of the Cabinet to force a conflict, it is difficult to appreciate the reasons which induced the Government to take up the indefensible and unusual attitude of demanding that Parliament should pass the

first half of a great measure of reform, before the principles governing the second and more important section of it were disclosed.

On the second reading of the Franchise Bill, Lord John Manners, on behalf of the Opposition, moved an amendment to the effect that the House declined to proceed with the Bill until it had before it the full details of the Government scheme of Parliamentary reform. In opposing this the Liberal leaders failed to give any adequate reasons for their conspiracy of silence with respect to redistribution. Lord Hartington's answer was that the necessity for bringing forward a complete bill was not imperative, and that Parliament could not possibly deal with both bills in one session. Mr. Bright sneered at the greater readiness shown by Conservatives to discuss the Redistribution Bill which was not before them, than to criticise the Franchise Bill which was. Mr. Chamberlain accused the Opposition of being afraid to trust the people, and imparted the information that the scheme of redistribution would not follow the precedent set by the Conservatives in 1867. In replying to the whole debate, Mr. Gladstone argued that a knowledge of the manner in which the new franchises would be distributed was almost essential to enable the Government to determine the details of the plan of redistribution. The amendment was rejected by 340 to 210 votes, and the Franchise Bill was read a second time.

The third reading marked the beginning of a serious agitation. During the debates it had become clear that the Conservatives, who offered no opposition to the principle or scope of the Franchise Bill, relied upon the measure being rejected by the House of Lords. Referring to rumours that the measure

would be thrown out by the Peers, Mr. Gladstone warned the Opposition against provoking a conflict, which opened a prospect more serious than any that had occurred since the first Reform Bill. The attitude of the Government was, in Shakespeare's words, "Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in, bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee." This declaration was received with wild cheers by the Radicals. After a brief debate, during which Mr. Gladstone's speech was described by Sir Stafford Northcote as extraordinary, theatrical, and an attempt to intimidate the House of Lords, the Conservatives left the House, and the Bill was read a third time *nemine contradicente*.

In the House of Lords, the Bill was opposed by Earl Cairns, who moved that the House, while prepared to concur in a well-considered and complete scheme for the extension of the franchise, could not assent to a measure without provision for redistribution, or any security that the enfranchisement would not go into operation before redistribution became law. This was carried by 205 votes to 146. Mr. Gladstone at once declared that all Government measures would be abandoned, Parliament would be prorogued as speedily as possible, and arrangements made for an Autumn session. Efforts made by the more moderate men of both parties to effect a compromise led to nothing. Negotiations were futile. The Government offered to propose identical resolutions in both Houses reciting that the Franchise Bill had been passed, in reliance on an engagement that ministers would use every effort to carry a bill for the redistribution of seats in the ensuing session. This offer was rejected by Lord Salisbury, who urged that no Government, not even the most powerful, could

guarantee that a redistribution bill would be passed before the dissolution. The demand of the Opposition was that the scheme of redistribution should be placed before them while Parliament was in a position to modify it, should it prove to be manifestly unjust. "How should we be able to modify it if we had this pistol put to our heads: 'Unless you pass this bill you shall have no bill at all, and you go to the country with a new enfranchisement on the old constituencies?'" Why was it that the Government would not put a clause in the Franchise Bill to prevent its coming into operation without redistribution? If that demand had been granted the whole difficulty would have been at an end.

Many Liberals contended that the House of Lords, not being an elective body, had no right to deal with the Franchise Bill. Such a contention is obviously absurd. As long as a second Chamber exists it is entitled to exercise its independence of judgment upon all questions requiring its assent. Whether it would not be wise to effect material changes in the constitution of the House of Lords is entirely a different matter. Not only Liberals, but very many Conservatives desire to see the hereditary principle largely restricted, and the Upper Chamber strengthened by being brought more into sympathy with the people. But a recognition of the defects and weaknesses of the House of Lords as now constituted, is no excuse for the eagerness with which Mr. Gladstone, and many other Liberals, seized every occasion to inflame popular passion against the Peers. It appears to us that in the conflict now precipitated between the two Chambers by the Liberal Ministry, the Peers were distinctly in the right, and Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues hopelessly in the wrong.

Be that as it may, it was soon evident that those on both sides who desired a compromise were in a minority.

A policy of "no surrender," had attractions for both Radicals and Conservatives. The Opposition, who viewed the extension of the new franchise to Ireland as a serious menace to the integrity of the Empire, wished to force a dissolution. In the action of the Lords, Liberals, unfortunately, saw nothing but an opportunity for promoting an agitation throughout the country. Between the prorogation of Parliament and the Autumn session, a fierce campaign against the House of Lords was carried on. The Peers were threatened, denounced, and vilified in language aptly described as "political Billingsgate." They were represented not as having demanded information respecting the redistribution of seats bill, but as having refused to permit an extension of the franchise. In 1859, Mr. Bright had warned the nation to "repudiate without mercy any bill of any Government, whatever its franchise, whatever its seeming concessions may be, if it does not redistribute the seats." The House of Lords had acted on that excellent advice, and for doing so were denounced by Mr. Bright as "an arrogant and unpatriotic oligarchy," "the spawn of the plunder, and the wars, and the corruption of the dark ages of our country." Mr. John Morley predicted that "no power on earth can separate henceforth the question of mending the House of Commons from the question of mending or ending the House of Lords." Mr. Chamberlain, who has studied with advantage the advice of the Apostle to be "all things to all men," declared that the Conservatives hated the franchise, and would not extend it unless they could take away

with one hand what they gave with the other. For over a hundred years the House of Lords, who had never done anything to advance the common weal, "had protected every abuse and sheltered every privilege. It had denied justice and delayed reform. It is irresponsible without independence, obstinate without courage, arbitrary without judgment, and arrogant without knowledge." Many curious extracts might be given from the rantings of demagogues, whom in a fit of mental aberration the nation mistook for responsible statesmen.

The Conservatives defended their position with great ability and energy. Lord Salisbury, in a particularly effective speech, argued that all the measures with which Parliament had laboriously been dealing during the session had suddenly been thrown violently aside, for no reason, except that the Prime Minister was behaving like a man, who having met with some domestic quarrel, broke all his crockery to show how much he felt it. Mr. Gladstone had thrown away all the valuable labours of the session, not because anything that had happened made it more difficult to pass the various bills, but simply in order to raise a conflict with the House of Lords. There was much truth in these taunts. They stung, and they told on the mind of the people, who began to think there must be something in the allegation that the Government wanted to pass the Franchise Bill first, in order that they might force through Parliament a scheme of redistribution under which the rearrangement of the constituencies would be manipulated so as to secure the Liberals undue advantage over their opponents.

To assist his party in arousing public opinion and enlisting it against the House of Lords, Mr. Gladstone undertook a great campaign in Midlothian. His

journey from Hawarden to Dalmeny was a triumphal progress. At the numerous great meetings he addressed, he was received with a frantic enthusiasm which no other statesman could have called forth. His denunciations of the House of Lords were received with wild cheering. Though he declined personally to enter upon questions of change in the constitution until their necessity could no longer be denied, he declared that the vast majority of people thought the time had come to study the means of making organic reforms in the House of Lords. The plea of the Peers that they had rejected the Franchise Bill because it was not accompanied by a scheme of redistribution, was a dishonest one; but though the Lords had erred, their error was not irretrievable. If the Upper House would give way to the expressed opinion of the representative Chamber, supported by the general voice of the nation, "and recede from this, for them, ill-starred, unhappy, and if continued, most menacing conflict," all might yet be well. But he wished to appeal to the reason of the House of Lords, not to its fears. The three points, upon which Mr. Gladstone laid most stress in his Midlothian speeches, were that the action of the Peers was indefensible, could not be permitted, and ought not to be persisted in; that the solution of the conflict lay with the nation; and that the Lords would do well to hasten to swallow in November what they had rejected in July. There was to be no concession on the part of the Government. If the Lords, acting with the wisdom that had characterised them on previous occasions, did not seize the opportunity to "recover the consequences of their unfortunate step," the Government would not leave their supporters in the lurch. If Mr. Gladstone's speeches meant anything they indicated

clearly that the Ministry would bring in their Franchise Bill again without any scheme of redistribution, and defy the Lords to stop the progress of the measure. But fortunately more moderate views prevailed.

In spite of the thunders of applause with which Mr. Gladstone was received, there was evidence that the position adopted by the Prime Minister and some of his colleagues, was regarded with disapproval by a considerable section of the Liberal party. Earl Cowper, at the beginning of the conflict, had urged the necessity of compromise, and the imprudence of presenting the Franchise Bill in the Autumn for the acceptance or rejection of Parliament, unaccompanied by any other measure. The Government having admitted that they could, if they chose, present a Redistribution Bill in the Autumn, Lord Cowper, as a Liberal, declared that they ought to do so. This view was accepted by many other Liberals, whose opinion gradually made itself felt. It was evident to dispassionate critics that the Government could not afford to alienate any of their supporters. The position of the Ministry was anything but a strong one. During the session they had been defeated in the House of Commons by 208 votes to 197 on the question of the relief of local taxation, and though the victory of their opponents was a barren one, it had none the less added to the embarrassment of the Cabinet. Abroad, and particularly in South Africa and the Soudan, the policy of the Ministry had been unpopular. The defeat at Majuba, and the surrender to the Boers, the massacre of the troops under Hicks and Baker and of the Egyptian garrisons, the abandonment of Gordon, were records upon which Mr. Gladstone and his followers did not dare to appeal to the country. Their anxiety to avoid a dissolution was quite as great as the

eagerness of the Opposition to force one. Every effort had been made to arouse the nation against the House of Lords. But these endeavours were not successful. Beyond the cheers to be elicited at political meetings by the use of threatening language against the Peers, there was no more enthusiasm for the campaign against the Upper House, than there was for the Kilmainham Treaty or the Majuba surrender.

Both parties having declared for a policy of "no surrender," a way out of the difficulty had to be found. Hints as to the possibility of a compromise began to be dropped by Lord Hartington, Mr. Fawcett, and other Liberal speakers. The Conservative leaders responded to these overtures in equally guarded language. But the negotiations did not progress, and the time for the reassembling of Parliament was fast approaching. An ingenious solution of the situation was devised. The draft scheme of redistribution of seats, drawn up for the consideration of the Cabinet by a ministerial committee, was secretly given to *The Standard* for publication. With its appearance the vast bubble which the Government had inflated collapsed. For the sake of appearances both parties continued to hold their ground. At the opening of the session, on October 23rd, Mr. Gladstone solemnly went through the farce of reaffirming that the two branches of the Reform question could not be considered together. The Government could not accept the demand of the Opposition "without discredit and dishonour. The real question now was which majority was to prevail, that in the Lords or that in the Commons? The intention of the Government was that the majority in the Commons should prevail, and they could not consent to surrender at discretion." But this heroic attitude could not be main-

tained. A grave conflict was to be renewed about a shadow. The provisions of the redistribution scheme were known. There was no probability of the Government measure being resisted by the Opposition, who had given their support to a more liberal scheme than that which had been published by *The Standard*. Both sides recognised the futility of further controversy.

Two events tended to render the Government more conciliatory. A formidable and very damaging indictment was made by Lord Randolph Churchill in the House of Commons against Mr. Chamberlain, who was accused of a systematic attempt to incite the people to riot and disorder by speeches delivered at Birmingham, Hanley, and Newtown. Lord Randolph made out so good a case for his vote of censure, that, in spite of Mr. Chamberlain's able defence of his conduct, the Government only secured a majority of 36 in a House of nearly 400. The fact that with the exceptions of Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Gladstone, not a single minister uttered a word in defence of Mr. Chamberlain, showed how little sympathy there was with the President of the Board of Trade, and gave those behind the scenes a vivid idea of the bitterness that existed between various members of the Cabinet. While the controversy over the Lords was still dragging on, an important bye-election took place in South Warwickshire. It was not only won by the Conservatives, who thus gained a seat from the Liberals; but it was significant that while the conservative vote had largely increased since 1880, the Liberal polling showed an even greater falling off.

Shakespeare says, "your If is the only peace-maker; much virtue in If." Both parties found it so. While

the Franchise Bill was being passed by the House of Commons, negotiations were proceeding privately. Eventually it was agreed that "the Government would receive in trust a communication from the Opposition that they would go into consultation on the Redistribution Bill, but would not ask for any assurance as to the passing of the Franchise Bill as a preliminary to such a consultation." If after consultation the Opposition approved of the Redistribution Bill, they were to give an assurance that the Franchise Bill should pass. In that case the Government undertook to introduce their redistribution scheme into the House of Commons when the Lords went into Committee on the Franchise Bill, which was to be passed before Christmas. Relying upon the loyal support of the Conservatives, the Government would give a pledge staking not only their credit but their existence upon the passing of the Redistribution Bill, framed by the heads of both parties, during the session of 1885.

Thus ended the great controversy between the Lords and the Commons. The Lords got everything they had demanded, and something more. Under consultation with Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote, many important changes and improvements were introduced into the Cabinet scheme of redistribution. By the friendly conferences between the heads of the two parties on this great measure, in which both were equally interested, the best interests of the nation were promoted. But what is to be said of the statesmanship that out of pique, and to gratify personal vanity, without having a single great or worthy object to serve, sacrificed the legislative efforts of a whole session, precipitated a conflict between the two Houses

of Parliament, organised a vast campaign from one end of the land to the other, held 1,512 public meetings to denounce the action of the House of Lords, made violent and inflammatory appeals to the worst passions of the masses against a portion of the Constitution, and ended by adopting the very course which for over two months had been denounced from John O'Groat's to the Land's End?

The Redistribution of Seats Bill, which, with the Franchise Bill, was passed without further serious difficulty, was a measure of great importance. By the broad and statesmanlike changes made, results of greater moment than even those arising from the extension of the franchise, were conferred upon the country. Except in the case of a few boroughs, and the City of London, single member constituencies were created throughout the United Kingdom. This system was opposed to the views of several Liberal members, including Mr. Courtney, who resigned his office in the Government as Financial Secretary of the Treasury. It was contended that the single member system would fail altogether to obtain the judgment of the people, and that it afforded no security that a majority of representatives would not be returned by the minority of the electors. The type of representatives sent to Parliament would be deteriorated; town members would be of the vestry order, and county members would be ratepayers' members. The views of Mr. Courtney were shared by Mr. Goschen, and Sir John Lubbock, but otherwise met with little support, and have not been justified by experience.

The membership of the House of Commons was increased by the Redistribution Bill from 652 to 670. Of the 18 additional seats, England was given six and

Scotland twelve. The Bill disfranchised all boroughs with a population below 15,000; gave one member only to towns with a population of from 15,000 to 50,000; permitted the old two member system to continue in towns with a population of from 50,000 to 165,000; and provided that places with over 165,000 inhabitants should receive additional members in proportion of one to every fifty or sixty thousand. With the special exception already mentioned, each borough or county was divided into as many separate districts as there were members to be returned. Under these provisions 160 seats were extinguished altogether. In England seventy-three, in Scotland two, and in Ireland twenty-two boroughs lost their representation entirely. Three towns in Ireland, and 34 in England and Wales lost one member each. The total number of seats set free was 160. Of the 670 seats to be distributed, England received 465, Wales 30, Scotland 72, and Ireland 103. Eight new boroughs were created, and the representation of London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other large centres, was increased in proportion to their population. The English counties previously represented by 172 members were given 241; the representation of Irish counties was increased from 63 to 85, and Scotland gained seven additional county members. The great work of Reform begun in 1832 was now complete. Within little more than half a century a revolution had been effected in the political system of the country. The control of power originally enjoyed by the privileged few had been extended first to the middle classes, then to the people in the towns, and finally to the rural population. Under the beneficent rule of the Queen the bounds of democracy had been as widely enlarged

as British statesmanship deemed prudent. The policy of trusting the people, of believing in the instincts of the masses, is more fully justified as the years increase. Broad based upon the people's will, His Majesty's throne is more secure than that of any other sovereign in the world; and of all peoples the British appear to be peculiarly fitted to be entrusted with the fullest rights and responsibilities of citizenship, without fear of abuse, or of danger to the destinies of a mighty nation upon whose possessions the sun never sets.

The condition of Ireland had continued to improve. Agrarian crime had largely disappeared. But dangerous Fenian conspiracies had not been stamped out. During 1884 and the beginning of the following year, a number of political outrages occurred. Plots were formed in New York, Paris, Brussels, and Dublin, for wrecking public buildings in Great Britain. A criminal society called the "Avengers" was discovered in Dublin. The object of its members was "the removal" of obnoxious witnesses, jurors, and judges. An attempt to promote dynamite explosions in Birmingham, led to the arrest of two Fenians named Daly and Egan, who were convicted and sent to prison, the former for life and the latter for twenty years. For some months a state of terror existed in London. A series of explosions occurred at Victoria Station, two stations on the Underground Railroad, in St. James's Square, and in Scotland Yard, the headquarters of the Metropolitan police. After an interval an attempt was made to destroy London Bridge; in January, 1885, the House of Commons and Westminster Hall were partly wrecked by dynamite explosions, two policemen being seriously injured, and a similar outrage occurred at the Tower. Two men named Cunningham and Burton were arrested, found

guilty of having promoted all these explosions, and sentenced to penal servitude for life. During their trial an unsuccessful attempt was made to wreck the Admiralty, and the authors of the outrage escaped detection. With these dastardly crimes the dynamite conspiracies came to an end. A resolution passed by the Senate of the United States, led to steps being taken to check the unrestrained liberty criminals had previously enjoyed, in carrying on in Great Britain a campaign of outrage and assassination organised and directed from America. The good sense of the American people had at length triumphed over ignorance and the exigencies of political parties.

From the time of its formation, potent forces of demoralisation had been at work in the Government. Success had not attended the effort to reunite the Liberal party by agitation against the House of Lords. Instead of healing differences the ill-considered campaign had only widened those that already existed and created others. The Whigs were opposed on many questions to the Gladstonian Liberals; the Liberals disliked the way in which their hands were forced by the Radicals; and the Radicals, led by Mr. Chamberlain, heartily reciprocated the animosity of both Whigs and Gladstonians. Notwithstanding the great array of talent it combined, the Ministry was perhaps the feeblest to which the destinies of the nation had ever been entrusted. Of the important questions with which it had been called upon to deal, there was scarcely one in home, colonial, or foreign policy, on which it had not been divided, with the inevitable results of weakness, vacillation, and disaster. The fall of Khartoum, and the death of Gordon, were the crowning disasters of the Government's policy. A vote of censure on their Egyptian policy was only

rejected by 302 votes against 288. Had anyone but Mr. Gladstone been at the head of the Government the motion would have been carried by an overwhelming majority. By a series of shifts and compromises the Cabinet managed to prolong its existence till June, 1885. But soon after the reassembling of Parliament it was evident that its discreditable course was almost run.

The discussion of the Redistribution of Seats Bill delayed the introduction of the Budget till an unusually late period of the session. When it was at length brought forward several of Mr. Childers' proposals met with strong opposition. An amendment, worded so as to unite all the elements of discontent, was carried against the Government on June 8th, by 264 votes to 252. During the debate more than a dozen Liberals left the House, and seventy-six were absent when the division was taken. Whether the Government had practically arranged for its own defeat is uncertain. The accusation was openly made at the time, and led to a good deal of recrimination. But the vote, and the resignation of the Ministry which followed, were far from being viewed as disasters by Liberals. The Government had covered itself with odium. Not one of its supporters grieved over its downfall; many could ill-disguise their feelings of exultation at having been relieved from the responsibility of supporting an administration which for months had been drifting to destruction. At most the catastrophe could only have been delayed a few weeks. The Irish Crimes Act expired in the Autumn. The question whether it should be renewed in its original, or some modified form, was one upon which the Cabinet must have split. Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Rosebery, and others were opposed

to any further resort to coercion. Agrarian crime had practically ceased to exist in Ireland, and ministers had no wish to face a general election under the new conditions created by the Franchise and Redistribution of Seats Acts, with the disadvantages of a coercion policy hung round their necks. A bid had to be made for the Parnellite vote, lest it should be captured by the Conservatives, who for some months had been indirectly seeking an alliance with the Irish Nationalists. On the other hand Lord Spencer and the Whig section of the Cabinet had pronounced in favour of maintaining exceptional powers for the preservation of law and order in Ireland. If no compromise between these hostile sections of the Ministry could be effected a rupture was inevitable. As a matter of party tactics, therefore, the Liberals were heartily glad their feeble and discredited Government had been defeated on its financial proposals. The odium of renewing, or the responsibility of abandoning the Irish Crimes Act had not only been got rid of, but had been shifted on to the shoulders of the Conservatives, who could not possibly reap any glory, and might fall upon disaster, during the brief interval that remained before the work of registration throughout the constituencies could be completed, and a dissolution take place.

If the Liberals were demoralised the Conservatives were far from being united. Under the aggressive leadership of Lord Randolph Churchill a revolt had been fostered against the authority of Sir Stafford Northcote, and, to a less degree, of Lord Salisbury. The action of the two leaders in committing their followers to the chief provisions in the Redistribution Bill, was bitterly resented by the Tory democrats bent upon making political capital. The Fourth Party

was now a power that had to be reckoned with. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had joined the ranks of the faction, and supported Lord Randolph Churchill in openly defying the authority of Sir Stafford Northcote. When the Conservatives were called upon to form a government the Fourth Party dictated its own terms. With the bluntness which characterised his brilliant but brief political career, Lord Randolph Churchill demanded that Sir Stafford Northcote should be transferred to the Upper Chamber, and that Sir M. Hicks-Beach should be made Leader of the House of Commons. Accordingly Sir Stafford was created Earl of Iddesleigh, and given the nominal post of First Lord of the Treasury, which had been associated with the premiership since the days of Walpole. Lord Salisbury was Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary; Lord Randolph Churchill took the Secretaryship of State for India, and secured appointments for all his personal adherents, including Mr. A. J. Balfour, who became President of the Local Government Board. Mr. Gibson, who had rendered great services to his party, was raised to the peerage as Lord Ashbourne, and made Chancellor of Ireland, and Lord Carnarvon was appointed Lord-Lieutenant.

Largely owing to the efforts of Lord Randolph Churchill a working alliance was formed between the Conservatives, who were in a minority in the House of Commons, and the Parnellites. Lord Carnarvon announced that the Government would not renew the Crimes Act, but would rely upon the ordinary law. An Irish Land Purchase Bill was introduced by Lord Ashbourne and speedily passed. It afforded extraordinary facilities to Irish tenants to become the owners of their holdings. Peasants who could pay down one-fourth of the purchase price of their farms

were to receive the balance as a loan from the State upon very favourable terms. Holders who could advance no part of the purchase money themselves, would be enabled to buy with the help of the State, twenty per cent of the purchase money being retained by the Land Commission until the tenant had paid off a part of his indebtedness. The amount to be advanced by the State was limited to five millions: but subject to that restriction the measure gave every opportunity to Irish peasants to become the proprietors of the soil. Advantage has been largely taken of its provisions, and the operations of the Act produced excellent results in Ireland.

Several other measures of importance were passed before the rising of Parliament. The rate for inland telegrams was reduced to sixpence. A Bill dealing with the housing of the working classes gave effect to many of the recommendations of a Royal Commission which had inquired into the question. Owners of houses were made liable to keep their property in a healthful and habitable condition, and in the event of reasonable care and precaution not being taken could be sued for damages arising out of sickness or death. Overcrowding was discouraged and checked by several special clauses, and the Local Government Board was empowered to undertake the building of lodging-houses for the working classes.

Two significant events occurred before the dissolution. On July 27th Dr. Walsh, who had long distinguished himself among the Irish Roman Catholic bishops as the special champion of the Parnellites and the National League, was appointed Archbishop of Dublin. The conflict between the Pope and the Irish Nationalists had ended in a complete victory for the members who had recently been described by Mr.

Bright as "disloyal to the Crown, directly hostile to Great Britain," and as having "displayed a boundless sympathy for criminals and for murderers." But as first the Liberals and then the Conservatives had not hesitated to ally themselves with the Irish Nationalists when their votes were useful, so it would, indeed, have been strange if Rome had continued to discountenance the revolutionary forces to which British statesmen were fain to pay homage.

Early in the electoral campaign that followed the prorogation of Parliament, Mr. Parnell announced that nothing would satisfy Irish demands but national independence. The restoration of Grattan's Parliament in College Green, was defined as the irreducible minimum that would be accepted. Whether the Irish would insist upon complete separation might be an open question; British statesmen must be content to trust the Irish altogether. As to the tariff question, the Irish Parliament would wisely begin its activity by establishing a protective tariff to foster the few branches of industry in which the Irish could excel, but which had been crushed out by Great Britain.

Mr. Gladstone at the beginning of his Midlothian campaign warned his followers that if they allowed themselves "by any follies among ourselves, to be so far divided and weakened, and split up in one place and another, that, although we are a majority over the Tory party, yet we are not a majority of the Parliament, not only the Tory party, and not only the Liberal party, but the Empire, will be in danger, because questions of the gravest moment, the most Imperial weight, and of vast consequences, will in all likelihood come forward, and there will be no party qualified to deal with them in that independence of

position which alone can ensure a satisfactory and an honourable issue.”* Replying, on November 17th, to a demand made by Mr. Parnell that he should frame and make known the plan of the Liberal party for giving local self-government to Ireland, Mr. Gladstone said, “the wish of Ireland clearly and constitutionally expressed deserves our most respectful and favourable attention. But then I do not yet know what the wish of Ireland is, nor shall I know it, nor can it be constitutionally expressed, until after the election which is now approaching. If I were so rash as to make myself the volunteer physician of the people of Ireland instead of those authorised doctors whom she is going to send by and by to the House of Commons, I should not only exhibit myself in a capacity I do not wish to fill before the public, but I should seriously damage any proposal which might have been hatched in my mind.”

Extraordinary interest centred in the general election that followed. The most experienced judges could form no estimate as to the use the two and a half million voters who had been added to the electorate would make of their newly acquired power. In the boroughs, where the first results of the appeal to the country were made known, the decision was against the Liberals. A great change in public opinion had taken place in nearly all the large centres of population since 1880. Even where Conservative candidates failed to secure victory there was a marked increase in the Tory vote at the expense of the Liberal. Mr. Bright’s majority was reduced to 800 by Lord Randolph Churchill, and many members of the late Government were defeated. Of the 232

*Mr. Gladstone’s *Speech at Edinburgh*, November 9th, 1885.

borough seats in England alone, 118 were carried by Conservatives, 110 by Liberals, three by Independents, and one, at Liverpool, where the Irish vote was very strong, by a Parnellite.

While the result of the contest hung in the balance, Mr. Gladstone appealed to the new voters in the counties to give his party such a clear and strong majority over the combined forces of Conservatives and Parnellites that the Liberal policy of justice to, and conciliation of Ireland, might be carried out irrespective of the support of the Irish members. How far this appeal influenced the counties is doubtful. It certainly did not appeal to the more ignorant section of the agricultural labourers with the same force as the lavish promises of "three acres and a cow" made by certain Radicals, and the socialistic doctrines preached by Mr. Chamberlain. When the final results of the polling were declared, it was found that the Liberals numbered 333, the Conservatives 251, and the Parnellites 86. The prophecy of Mr. Parnell had been fulfilled. He was master of the situation.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOME RULE.

A FEW days after the result of the appeal to the country was known, the air became thick with rumours as to what Mr. Gladstone proposed to do. The Liberals were pledged to bring in some scheme of local self-government for Ireland. Out of 103 members, Ireland had returned 85 "authorised doctors" to direct Mr. Gladstone how to act as head "physician." Could he frame a measure of local government which would preserve the integrity of the Empire, and at the same time satisfy Mr. Parnell, who demanded an independent Parliament? During the first fortnight the idea that Mr. Gladstone would adopt Home Rule in the larger sense of the term was not seriously entertained. On December 16th a statement appeared in a provincial paper published at Leeds, for which city Mr. Herbert Gladstone had been returned. It purported to give an outline of Mr. Gladstone's scheme for the creation of an Irish Parliament. Although the Liberal leader denied that the announcement was an authentic representation of his views, it was soon regarded as substantially correct. Nothing definite, however, was to be learned. The members of Mr. Gladstone's late Cabinet were no better informed than the general public. We now know that the scheme had been launched with a view of ascertaining how far Liberals were prepared to go.

It was received from the first by a large section of the nation with indignation and dismay. Throughout Ulster it created an extraordinary sensation. An agitation sprang up which showed that if such a policy were carried into effect civil war might result. *The Northern Whig*, the chief Liberal paper in Ireland, declared emphatically against Home Rule. It was evident that if Mr. Gladstone brought forward any such proposals he would forfeit the support of many Liberals, and perhaps wreck the party. Mr. Chamberlain hastened to assert that all sections of the Liberal party were "determined that the integrity of the Empire shall be a reality and not an empty phrase. We shall allow no temptation and no threat to check our resolution to maintain unimpaired the effective union of the three kingdoms that owe allegiance to the sovereign." Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Childers, and other Liberals spoke even more strongly against any measure which pointed towards a repeal of the Union.

The new Parliament met for the transaction of business on January 21st, 1886. In the speech from the throne reference was made to "the attempt to excite the people of Ireland to hostility against the legislative union," and to the continued existence of organised intimidation in that country. Among the measures promised were bills for the reform of county government in Great Britain and the Sister Isle. In the debate that followed Mr. Gladstone cited a passage from his election address in favour of maintaining the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and the authority of Parliament. Subject to those conditions he was in favour of granting enlarged powers to every part of the Empire. As "an old parliamentary hand" he intended to preserve his freedom of action, and to keep his own counsel until there

might be a prospect of public benefit in making a movement forward. But in spite of the obscurity with which he expressed himself, it was evident that Mr. Gladstone saw nothing inconsistent with the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and the authority of Parliament, in granting Ireland legislative independence. Lord Randolph Churchill seized the first opportunity to make it clear, that in the opinion of the Conservatives there was no halfway house between entire separation and absolute Imperial control. The Local Government Bill of which the ministry had given notice, "would not come within any measureable distance of Mr. Parnell's object."

In the events that followed the skilful tactics of the old parliamentary hand were visible. On January 26th notice was given that the Government would ask leave two days later to introduce a bill for the purpose of suppressing the National League and other dangerous associations, for the prevention of intimidation, and for the protection of life, property, and public order in Ireland. But Mr. Gladstone was not desirous of defeating the Government on their Irish policy. To have done so would have forced the Liberals to declare their own views. That could more safely be done after they had secured office than before. It was therefore desirable to place the Government in a minority on a side issue. A suitable occasion was found in an amendment to the Address, moved by Mr. Jesse Collings, reflecting upon the Government for not having promised to afford agricultural labourers facilities to obtain small holdings. The "three acres and a cow" policy, and the theories of Messrs. Chamberlain, Collings, and Joseph Arch, about the land, had been refused by Mr. Gladstone a place in the authorised Liberal programme. They

formed part of the much larger "unauthorised" programme of Mr. Chamberlain, which had at one time threatened to prevent all sections of the Liberal party finding refuge under Mr. Gladstone's umbrella. But the present opportunity was too good a one to be missed. Mr. Gladstone threw the whole weight of his influence in favour of Mr. Collings' amendment, which was carried by 331 votes against 252. The Ministry accepted its defeat and resigned.

Mr. Gladstone experienced more trouble in forming a government than he had anticipated. Many efforts were made to induce Lord Hartington, Mr. Goschen, and Sir Henry James, to take office, but without success. The adhesion of Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan was only secured by assurances that the Ministerial policy was to be one of inquiry and examination, and not necessarily one based on the idea of separate parliaments. Mr. John Morley was made Chief Secretary for Ireland; the positions held by Sir W. Harcourt and Mr. Childers in the previous Liberal Government, were now reversed, the former becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer and the latter going to the Home Office. Lord Spencer became President of the Council, and Lord Rosebery Secretary for Foreign Affairs, aided by Mr. Bryce as Under-Secretary. For the first time in the history of the United Kingdom a working man was permitted to hold a place in the government of the country. Mr. Henry Broadhurst, who started in life as a stonemason, and had risen by the force of his own character and abilities to his present position, was appointed Under-Secretary of the Home Office.

Feverish excitement and unrest followed Mr. Gladstone's return to office. A feeling of insecurity existed throughout the country. Mr. Gladstone had of late

years so often taken both his party and the nation by surprise, that no one knew what might occur. But though the country was prepared to learn that the Government proposals for dealing with Ireland would be of a startling and drastic character, the constitutional revolution involved by Mr. Gladstone's scheme came as a shock to the whole of the educated classes. Until Mr. Gladstone explained his Bill "to amend the provision for the future government of Ireland," moderate men of both parties had refused to believe that the veteran statesman would consent to pull down the constitution to please Mr. Parnell, and keep himself in power. The Bill provided for the establishment in Ireland of a separate executive government solely responsible to a legislature sitting in Dublin, and with full power to amend the civil and criminal law, regulate the protection of life and property, and revise existing contracts. A number of highly complicated provisions were made for maintaining the supremacy of the Crown. All Irish representatives were excluded from the Imperial Parliament, and in violation of the constitutional principle that taxation and representation go together, Ireland was to be required to contribute £3,242,000 a year to the revenue of Great Britain. The Home Rule Bill, as it was termed, was accompanied by a Land Purchase Bill under which the Irish Parliament were to be enabled to buy out the landlords and transfer the soil to the tenants by means of loans from the taxpayers of Great Britain.

Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan withdrew from the Government. A great schism was created in the Liberal Party. The Liberal press of the country was almost unanimous in condemning the two measures of the Cabinet. Neither the magic of Mr. Glad-

stone's eloquence, nor the efforts of the National Liberal Federation to coerce Members of Parliament, could induce a large number of Liberals to accept proposals which they felt convinced would ultimately lead to separation, financial disaster, and civil war. Party passion was inflamed to the utmost. Serious riots took place in Ulster. Nothing that has happened during the century caused such bitter political division, recrimination, and violent personalities. The courtesies of public life were suspended. A torrent of invective and opprobrious epithets was hurled against Mr. Gladstone, whose partisans in turn denounced the Liberals who refused to accept the new Irish policy of their Chief with a vehemence and fierceness almost without parallel in English history. The Whigs under the leadership of Lord Hartington formed themselves into an association of Liberal Unionists, which was joined by large numbers of men throughout the country. Mr. Chamberlain was supported by fifty of the Radical members of the House of Commons. On the second reading of the Home Rule Bill the Ministry were defeated by 341 against 311 votes. Ninety-three Liberals voted against the Government. Mr. Gladstone had satisfied Mr. Parnell, and had destroyed his own party. It has never recovered.

The session was brought to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and on June 26th Parliament was dissolved. In the fiercely fought contest that followed Mr. Gladstone was driven to take up a more extreme attitude. He denounced the Union between Great Britain and Ireland as "a paper union, obtained by force and fraud." The character and policy of Mr. Pitt, the greatest statesman of the eighteenth century,—perhaps, with all his shortcomings, the greatest

statesman England has ever produced,—were assailed with a vehemence which is seldom extended even to living opponents. Industrious explorers routed in the garbage heaps of a past century to furnish Mr. Gladstone with evidence in support of his assertions. Age and experience which render most men more tolerant had only added to the imperiousness of Mr. Gladstone's naturally imperious nature. Always impatient of opposition, and ill-fitted to bear constraint, never a conciliatory chief to his colleagues, few of whom ever shared his confidence, Mr. Gladstone had become through years, and the passionate adulation of large numbers of his fellow-men in whose eyes he could do no wrong, more arbitrary, more absolute, more overbearing in the imposition of his will upon the members of his Cabinet, and upon his supporters, than any statesman in the annals of the British Parliament. That colleagues bowed before him almost with the same servile submission as a large portion of the general public, is only additional evidence of the greatness of his intellect, which dwarfed the mental capacity of other men, the rare magnetism of his personality, the intensity of his convictions, the peculiar charm and courtesy of his manner.

The general election resulted in an overwhelming defeat of the Government. To the new parliament there were returned 316 Conservatives, 74 Liberal Unionists, 196 Gladstonian Liberals, and 84 Parnellites, a majority of 110 against Home Rule. Mr. Gladstone had asked the country to choose between Lord Salisbury's Irish policy of "twenty years' resolute government," and the scheme for establishing a separate parliament in Dublin. But when the nation had given its verdict he refused to accept it as a final one. The Government resigned, Lord Salisbury again

became Prime Minister. Lord Randolph Churchill was made Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, a position he suddenly threw up four months later, owing to the refusal of his colleagues to reduce the estimates presented by the departments for the support of the Army and Navy. In the leadership of the House he was succeeded by Mr. W. H. Smith, and after some negotiations Mr. Goschen became Chancellor of the Exchequer,—the first step in a policy of coalition between the Liberal Unionists and the Conservatives. Mr. Chamberlain and his followers made endeavours to heal the schism in the Liberal ranks, but nothing came of the Round Table conferences.

In Ireland, the Parnellites devised a new organisation called the Plan of Campaign. The Judicial rents fixed by the machinery of Mr. Gladstone's Land Acts, were declared to be impossible. But the real causes of the new agitation were the grave abuses which existed on the estate of Lord Clanricarde, in Galway, and on the properties of a few other exceptional landlords. The Plan of Campaign was an ingenious one. Tenants on an estate were to decide how much of the rent they owed should be paid. Each tenant bound himself to abide by the decision of the majority, not to act without the other tenants, and to accept no offer which was not extended to his fellows. A committee was to be appointed, who would take charge of the reduced rents. These were to be tendered to the landlord or his agent. If they were refused, the money was to be used to support tenants of the estate dispossessed either by sale or ejectment. Attempts of the Government to suppress this new form of agitation under the National League were not successful, until additional powers were ob-

tained during the session of 1887 by the passing of a new Crimes Act. Boycotting had been largely revived, and throughout Ireland agitation was carried on with ceaseless activity. Unfortunately during the struggle with the forces of disorder Mr. Gladstone arrayed himself against the Government. His statement that there was nothing immoral or unlawful in "exclusive dealing," was generally understood as a declaration in favour of boycotting, and did much harm. The resistance of the law was approved by the advice to his followers to "remember Mitchelstown,"—a place where deplorable and fatal riots had taken place during evictions on the estate of the Countess of Kingston.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach retired from the position of Chief Secretary for Ireland owing to ill health, but retained his seat in the Cabinet, and was succeeded by Mr. Balfour, who proved himself to be an administrator of great firmness, tact, and unfailing good temper under the most exasperating conditions. The National League was proclaimed as an illegal organisation, and Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Sullivan, and other members of parliament were prosecuted and temporarily imprisoned. The bitterness of the conflict in which the Government was engaged was increased by the publication of the famous series of articles in *The Times*, which attempted to identify Mr. Parnell and other Nationalist members with political murders and dynamite outrages. These charges which were indignantly repudiated by Mr. Parnell and his followers, gave rise to a number of violent and deplorable scenes in the House of Commons.

A further measure dealing with the Irish Land question was passed during the session. It aimed to

supply some of the omissions of previous legislation, and to remedy serious difficulties to which Mr. Gladstone's Land Acts had given rise. Judicial rents had been fixed for a term of fifteen years. But a heavy fall in agricultural prices had turned the fair rents of the Land Courts into rack-rents, which, under the altered conditions, tenants were unable to pay. The Land Act of 1887 provided that judicial rents might be re-adjusted every three years according to the rise or fall of agricultural produce; it admitted leaseholders to the benefits of the Land Act of 1881, so that they might obtain a revision of their rents; and made other concessions which Mr. Chamberlain described as generous to a degree, and going further than any previous Government had attempted to go.

The year 1887 will always be a memorable one in British history. It marked the completion of the fiftieth year of the Queen's reign, an event which was celebrated amidst rejoicings and demonstrations of loyalty throughout the Empire. In London Her Majesty's Jubilee was observed on the 21st of June. A thanksgiving service in Westminster Abbey was attended by the Queen and members of the Royal Family, representatives of the Colonies, eleven Indian Princes, many foreign Kings and royalties, and a vast crowd of all that was great and illustrious in the United Kingdom. The procession to the Abbey was the most splendid that had ever been witnessed in the Metropolis; the scene within the great historic fane, which all English people know and love so well, was at once the most brilliant and solemn that had ever taken place even within those walls; the demonstrations of loyalty and personal devotion to the Sovereign by the millions of people who thronged the streets, were without parallel in the history of the

Empire or of the world. The wonderful order preserved, and the good behaviour of the enormous multitudes were referred to with the highest admiration by the Queen, in the touching letter she afterwards addressed to the nation.

The great stimulus given to Imperial feeling by the Queen's Jubilee was reflected in the measures passed by Parliament during 1888. Improvements were made in the defence of the ports and coaling stations of the Empire; a special squadron, the cost of which was partly borne by the Colonies themselves, was provided for the protection of Australasian commerce. Lord Wolseley startled the country by re-stating at a public dinner what he had said without any notice being taken of his words, eighteen months before, in giving evidence before a Royal Commission. He declared that the English people knew nothing of the true military position of the nation; that our defences at home and abroad were in an unsatisfactory condition; and that our military forces were not organised or equipped as they should be to guarantee even the safety of the Metropolis. This and other causes forced the subject of the national defences of the Empire upon the attention of the Government, and led to a great programme being undertaken in following years for increasing the navy, and reorganising the army.

In other respects the session was a memorable one in the history of political progress. It witnessed an entire reform of local government in England. The administrative powers of the Justices of Quarter Sessions were transferred by the Local Government Act to County Councils, elected by the people. County magistrates who had up to this time enjoyed feudal privileges in the government of the rural dis-

tricts, were stripped of almost everything but their judicial functions. Though the administration of county affairs by Quarter Sessions was an anomaly, and conflicted with the sentiment and progress of the nation, there was little demand for reform. There were no flagrant abuses to be removed. As the chief ratepayers of the counties, the magistrates were personally interested in maintaining honest and economical administration. Many county gentlemen devoted great ability and a large amount of time to the management of county affairs, which were conducted in a manner that gave little ground for dissatisfaction. But the extension of the franchise to the counties rendered it necessary to sweep away the old system of local government by the privileged and irresponsible few.

The new County Councils were established on a democratic basis, and have proved a great success. If they are not as economical as the Quarter Sessions, they are far more efficient. With the exception of the police, over whom the new Councils and the Quarter Sessions exercise joint control, the entire administration of rural government was transferred to the people. Local government of the people, by the people, for the people, took the place of a not unbeneficent rule of the aristocracy. The large cities were constituted as counties by themselves. Boroughs with over ten thousand inhabitants retained their municipal form of administration; all smaller towns were practically merged into the county. For the first time a serious attempt was made to deal with the great question of the government of London. The Metropolis was created into an administrative county; the inefficient and corrupt Board of Works extinguished, and enlarged powers conferred upon the new representative body. But the provisions deal-

ing with London were the least satisfactory portion of the Act of 1888. They did not go far enough, and failed to put an end to the confusion, inefficiency, and extravagance, resulting from over-lapping and conflicting authorities.

In addition to reforming the system of county government, the Ministry carried provisions readjusting the relations between local and Imperial finance, and lightened the burdens imposed upon the rate-payers. These and other proposals, a further revision of the rules of parliamentary procedure, which were rendered much more stringent, and the opposition offered by the Parnellites and by many Liberals to all efforts of the Government, rendered an Autumn session necessary. Under an important scheme introduced by Mr. Goschen, the National Debt was converted, effecting a large saving to the taxpayers. Financially the measure was one of the most important passed during the last half of the century. It was conceived in a sense of equity both to the public creditor and to the taxpayer, and from the first commanded general confidence. Lord Ashbourne's Irish Land Purchase Act was renewed, and the first five millions having been exhausted within three years, a second similar sum was placed at the disposal of the Commissioners to enable tenants to buy their holdings.

In response to the reiterated demands of the Irish members a special commission was appointed by Parliament to investigate the charges made by *The Times*, in the articles entitled "Parnellism and Crime," against various Irish representatives. After an enquiry extending over many months the Judges reported in February, 1890: (I) That the accused collectively were not members of a conspiracy to establish the independence of Ireland, but that some of

them, with Mr. Davitt, founded and joined in the Land League organisation, with the intention of bringing about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. (II) That the respondents conspired by coercion and intimidation to prevent the payment of rents, so as to impoverish and expel the Irish landlords, who were styled the "English garrison." (III) That the charge of insincerity in denouncing crime was not established, and that the *facsimile* letters were forgeries. (IV) That the respondents disseminated newspapers tending to incite to sedition and crime. (V) That the respondents incited to intimidation, but not to the commission of other crime; and that they did not pay persons to commit crimes. (VI) That some of the respondents—especially Mr. Davitt—did express *bona fide* disapproval of crime; but that they did not denounce intimidation which led to crime and outrage. (VII) That the respondents defended persons charged with agrarian crime, but that they did not make payments to secure the escape of criminals from justice. (VIII) That they compensated persons injured in the commission of crime. (IX) That the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation of, and accepted subscriptions from, Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and of the use of dynamite; but that it had not been proved that they knew the Clan-na-Gael to be the controller of the League, or the collector of money for the parliamentary fund; that they did obtain the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force party in America including the Clan-na-Gael, and so abstained from condemning the action of that party. Three special charges against Mr. Parnell—that he knew Sheridan and Boyton to have been organising outrage at the time of the Kilmainham negotiations,

and that he wished to use them to put down outrage; that he was intimate with the leading Invincibles, and recognised the Phoenix Park murders as their handiwork; and that he enabled Frank Byrne to escape from justice to France in 1883—were all declared not proven.

Although agrarian crime had decreased in Ireland, and the power of coercive conspiracies had sensibly abated, the condition of the country remained far from satisfactory. The Plan of Campaign was carried on with undiminished vigour in spite of the efforts of the Government, and the number of farms for which it was impossible to find tenants had largely increased. A political tour in Ireland undertaken by Mr. Morley and Lord Ripon, and the attitude of Mr. Gladstone, who appeared to exult in the difficulties which beset the Government in endeavouring to maintain law and order, did much to aggravate the situation, which was not improved by the arrest and conviction of several Irish members of Parliament, including Messrs. Cox, Dillon, W. O'Brien, Blane, Condon, J. O'Kelly, J. O'Brien, J. E. Redmond, and Sheehan.

A renewed attempt made by the Pope to check the active participation of the Roman Catholic clergy in the political agitation, led to no good result. A visit of Monsignor Persico to Ireland was followed by the issue of a Papal Edict condemning the Plan of Campaign, and boycotting, and the clergy and laity were exhorted not to transgress the bounds of justice in endeavouring to secure reforms. A schism in the Catholic Church was threatened, and a visit of Archbishop Walsh to Rome led to the announcement that the Pope, without retracting the position he had taken up regarding the rights of property, the binding force of contracts, and the unqualified condemnation of

the Plan of Campaign and boycotting, intended his decree "to affect the domain of morals alone." By this curious expedient a schism was averted, and for all practical purposes the Papal rescript became a dead letter.

A great programme of naval construction was sanctioned by Parliament in 1889. The proposals of the Government extended over a period of seven years, and involved an expenditure of nearly twenty-two millions. Parliament was thus pledged to a definite expenditure over a series of years,—a new departure not without danger, and opposed to the principles of Liberal finance. But the opposition to Mr. Goschen's scheme was unsuccessful. An amendment, however, that the cost of the contracts should be met by sums voted from year to year, was supported by the whole of Mr. Gladstone's party. The justification for the unprecedented course taken by the Government lay in the fact, that by providing for the expenditure of a specially assigned capital fund, the additions to the navy so urgently needed could be made more quickly, efficiently, and economically. A liberal measure of local self-government, similar to that passed for England, was granted to Scotland. A bill for improving intermediate education in Wales, and another for establishing a special Government Department of Agriculture, were among the minor measures carried during the session. The year is also memorable for the great strike of dock-labourers in London, which cost the parties concerned over two millions of money, broke down unjust and oppressive conditions under which the men were employed, but, unfortunately, struck a blow at the trade of the port of London, from which it has never fully recovered.

The death of Mr. John Bright removed one of the

most striking figures in political life. Though not a statesman, Mr. Bright had for nearly half a century been a great force in public life. It was justly said that few men had ever applied so consistently to their public conduct the moral standard by which they regulated their private lives. His most bitter opponent never doubted the sincerity and disinterestedness of Mr. Bright's views. As a speaker he was, perhaps, the greatest master of pure English, the most truly eloquent orator the House of Commons has ever heard. In the judgment of men who had listened to all three, the eloquence of Pitt and of Fox at its best was inferior to the finest efforts of Mr. Bright. His style was unique. It was always lucid, and the language singularly simple, and free from affectation. But in its fire and vigour, its sustained imagery and metaphor, it was admirably fitted to give expression to the noble thoughts which should secure for him imperishable fame.

With a large programme of important legislation to deal with, the Government during the session of 1890 frittered away its time and opportunities, and accomplished little of value. At the last moment the principal measures under discussion had to be abandoned, and the next session of Parliament was fixed for November instead of at the opening of the new year. Events had shaken the credit of the Ministry. Though their policy in Ireland had been attended with much success, their inability to carry out useful legislation, their delay in proposing any scheme for extending a moderate measure of local self-government to Ireland, and other causes, had undermined public confidence. Rumours of an early dissolution were in the air. The spirits of the opposition were rising, everything pointed to a triumph of the com-

bined forces of Home Rule. At this critical juncture the alliance between Mr. Gladstone and the Irish members, and the Irish party itself, were rent in sunder. Causes wholly apart from politics led to a great change in the situation; and by the misfortunes of their opponents the Government were able to profit very largely.

It had been known for some time that Mr. Parnell was co-respondent in a suit for divorce brought by Captain O'Shea against his wife. From this charge, it had been declared, the Irish leader would emerge "without a stain on his honour." A denial had been entered to the suit, but when it came on for hearing no one appeared for Mr. Parnell, and the case was undefended. With the evidence given it is unnecessary to deal. But some of the minor disclosures damaged Mr. Parnell almost as much as the more serious offence of which he was found guilty. The renting of houses under false names, and other mean subterfuges to which he had resorted, added to the painful impression created by the trial. The decision of the Court was given on November 17th. It was known that Mr. Parnell did not intend resigning the leadership of his party. On November 25th, Mr. Gladstone informed him through Mr. McCarthy, that if he continued to hold the position it would be "productive of consequences disastrous in the highest degree to the cause of Ireland," and would render Mr. Gladstone's leadership of the Liberals, based as it mainly was on the prosecution of the Irish cause, almost a nullity. This message was received with contempt by Mr. Parnell. Representations made by Mr. Morley were not successful. Mr. Gladstone personally expostulated with Mr. Parnell, but failed to shake his determination to remain at the head of

the Irish party. On the following day the Irish members, who knew nothing of these expostulations, unanimously re-elected Mr. Parnell chairman, with great enthusiasm. But the moment the Nationalists learned that Mr. Gladstone would retire if Mr. Parnell remained their leader, the majority of them turned against their chief. A bitter feud now began. Mr. Parnell appealed to the Irish people, against their representatives who wanted to throw him to "the English wolves" howling for his destruction. The wire-pullers of the Liberal party were declared to have sapped the integrity and independence of the section of the Irish Parliamentary party who had listened to Mr. Gladstone's remonstrance. In November, 1889, Mr. Parnell had been invited to Hawarden, and during a confidential interview with Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley the proposals for a new scheme of Home Rule were laid before him. These Mr. Parnell now made public, denounced them as totally inadequate, and stated that Mr. Morley had endeavoured to induce him to accept them by promising him the post of Chief Secretary for Ireland in the next Liberal Ministry. The manifesto ended by warning the Irish people against the danger of any alliance with either English party. The contest was carried on with a rancour, and personal animosity which only political and religious conflicts can arouse. The hatred which the Nationalists had hitherto concentrated upon Irish landlords, was now directed against each other. Scenes of violence and rioting occurred in many places. With the publication of a declaration signed by twenty-two Roman Catholic bishops pronouncing against Mr. Parnell, his influence began rapidly to decline. But the greater the odds against him the fiercer was the energy with which he fought. Under

the combined effects of repeated defeat, despondency, and over-exertion, Mr. Parnell's constitution broke down, and a cold caught at a public meeting, caused his death on October 6th, 1891. With the disappearance of their remarkable leader the Nationalists lost their cohesion as a party, and have not succeeded in regaining the solidarity which for many years made them so great a force in the British Parliament.

The dissensions among their opponents greatly strengthened the position of the Government, who during the session 1890-91 carried an important Land Purchase Bill for Ireland to take the place of the Ashbourne Acts. Since the passing of Mr. Gladstone's first Irish Land Act, Parliament had travelled much further on the dangerous road of state socialism. Renewed efforts of the legislature to remedy defects, or overcome difficulties created by previous Acts, invariably gave rise to fresh complications and further demands upon the credit of the State. The Land Purchase Bill brought in by Mr. Balfour, who had become the leader of the House of Commons on the death of Mr. W. H. Smith, was nothing less than state landlordism on a gigantic scale. Its only justification was that it carried to a logical conclusion the work begun by measures previously passed by the legislature. But if an example and a warning ever be needed of the disastrous consequences of attempting to deal with the land by measures founded partly on confiscation, partly on socialism, and partly on a regard for the rights of property, a study of Irish Land Legislation will afford striking examples.

The Fee Grant proposals of the Government practically established free education. Under the Bill the existing system of education was not touched.

The measure simply offered to all Voluntary and Board Schools under the Elementary Education Acts, an extra annual grant of ten shillings per scholar calculated on the average attendance. All schools which accepted the grant, became free if their average fees did not exceed ten shillings a head per year; where the fees amounted to more the schools were allowed to charge the excess up to a certain limit.

The Factories and Workshops Act of 1891 greatly strengthened and extended the numerous measures which had previously been passed. Its object was to bring all factories and workshops, except domestic workshops, which were left to be governed by the general laws relating to public health, up to the same level in regard to ventilation, overcrowding, and other sanitary requirements; to fix a maximum working day of twelve hours for women, with one and a half hours for meals, to provide for proper means of escape in case of fire; and to remedy some of the evils of "sweating." Mr. Sydney Buxton moved a new clause prohibiting the employment of children under eleven years of age. Opposition being raised,—Sir J. Gorst stated that the delegates to the Berlin Conference were unanimously in favour of raising the limit of age to twelve. The Home Secretary pointed out that operatives from all parts of the country were opposed to the clause, which affected more than 175,000 children. As to the Berlin Conference, its recommendations had not been carried out by any nation. But in spite of the attitude of the Government the new clause was adopted.

The Small Agricultural Holdings Act, passed in 1892, marked a new departure in English land legislature. It was both an experiment, and a measure designed to secure the support of rural voters for the

Unionist Party. But the Act was undoubtedly an interesting effort in the right direction. Reference has already been made to the evils arising from the migration of the rural population to the towns. The new Act aimed at checking this movement by offering agricultural labourers facilities for acquiring land, and working it for their own profit. County Councils were empowered to borrow money to an amount that would not involve a charge upon the rates exceeding for any one year a penny in the pound, and to purchase land and resell it in small holdings of from one to fifty acres in extent. One-fifth of the purchase money had to be paid down by the peasant proprietor, the remainder being cleared off by instalments spread over a term of years. Holdings not exceeding fifteen acres might be let instead of being sold. Provision was also made by which the local authority under certain conditions might assist purchasers to erect necessary buildings.

CHAPTER XX.

THE WRECK OF THE LIBERAL PARTY.

IN opposing Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme, the Conservatives had declared their readiness to grant to Ireland the same local self-government as that enjoyed by Great Britain. A Bill embodying their proposals had been repeatedly promised, but, until the session of 1892, never introduced. It was now brought forward by Mr. Balfour, who explained that the aims of the Bill had always formed part of the cardinal policy of the Government. Before Mr. Gladstone had promised a separate legislature to Ireland, the Conservative scheme for establishing an elective system of local taxation and administration would have been regarded as liberal and democratic. Though the powers to be conferred upon County, and Baronial or Parish Councils, were accompanied by safeguards against corruption and the oppression of minorities, the measure was a generous one, and under more opportune circumstances might have been accepted as an earnest attempt to satisfy the demands of the Irish people. But from the first there was no chance of the Bill being passed. There was no enthusiasm for it among the supporters of the Government. The majority of Unionists held that Ireland was not in a condition to warrant the creation of nearly two hundred local democratic assemblies, each of which would probably become a centre of agitation for carrying on the war against landowners and

the "English garrison." On the other hand the Irish Nationalists, with the support of Mr. Gladstone behind them in favour of an Irish Parliament, denounced the Bill as "a sham" and "an insult." But though the Irish Local Government Bill was only introduced to be abandoned after its second reading, it did excellent service in settling the vexed question how far the Conservatives were prepared to go to meet the demands of the Home Rulers. Their Bill showed that they were prepared to concede the same system of county government to Ireland as they had extended to England and Scotland, but that they declined to go farther to catch votes or conciliate disloyal agitation.

The appeal to the country in 1892 was made upon these lines. Mr. Gladstone adhered to the broad outlines of his Home Rule Bill, except that Irish representatives were to be retained in the Imperial Parliament. The Anti-Parnellites gave an unqualified support to Mr. Gladstone; the Parnellites demanded that any Home Rule scheme should provide that the veto of the Crown should never be used against the Parliament to be set up in Dublin, except upon the advice of the Irish executive, and that the power of the Imperial Parliament should not be used to control the Irish legislative assembly. By the Conservatives, the consideration of social questions of pressing importance was held to have been already unfairly delayed by Ireland, while the danger of attempting to place the Protestants of Ulster, and the loyalists of Ireland generally, under an Irish Parliament, were especially insisted upon.

The General Election resulted in the return of 274 Gladstone Liberals and Labour Candidates, 72 Anti-Parnellites, and 9 Parnellites, a total of 355 members

in favour of Home Rule; 269 Conservatives, and 46 Liberal Unionists, or 315 members pledged to resist Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy. In England as distinct from other parts of the United Kingdom only 196 Gladstonians were elected, as compared with 268 Conservatives and Unionists; so that the predominant member of the partnership of the three Kingdoms had declared as emphatically as ever against Home Rule. Of the members returned for Great Britain, as distinct from Ireland, there was a majority of 16 in favour of the maintenance of the Union. The balance of power rested absolutely in the hands of the Irish Nationalists, and Mr. Gladstone was placed in the position he had solemnly declared, in 1885, to be one of great danger. On that occasion he had stated that though he believed the Liberal party to be honourable, patriotic, and trustworthy, it would not be safe for it, if dependent upon the Irish vote, "to enter on the consideration of a measure in respect of which, at the first step of its progress, it would be in the power of a party coming from Ireland to say, 'Unless you do this and unless you do that, we will turn you out to-morrow.' That would be a vital danger to the country and the empire." But these considerations no longer weighed with the leader of the Home Rulers. Mr. Gladstone hastened to enter upon the course he had condemned seven years before. On the meeting of Parliament in August, 1892, a vote of want of confidence in the Government was proposed by Mr. Asquith and carried by a majority of forty. The Conservatives resigned, and Mr. Gladstone formed his fourth administration. In its composition it did not differ as much as had been expected from its predecessor. Among the new men given office were Mr. Asquith, who became Home Secre-

tary, Mr. Acland, Vice-President of the Council,—the title under which the Minister of Education continued to be disguised,—Mr. Arnold Morley, Postmaster-General, and Mr. H. H. Fowler, President of the Local Government Board. Mr. Morley was made Chief Secretary for Ireland, Sir William Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Rosebery, Foreign Secretary.

Mr. Gladstone introduced his second Home Rule Bill on the 13th of February, 1893. It was not received with more favour than the former measure. It gave to Ireland a separate legislature, but instead of entirely excluding, reduced the Irish representation in the Imperial Parliament from 103 to 80 members. The Bill was one of the most complex ever presented to Parliament. It was resisted chiefly on the grounds that the eighty members to be returned by Ireland would be masters of the House of Commons, and umpires on British affairs, which they would handle for Irish purposes; that the financial scheme was impracticable; that there was no adequate guarantee of Imperial supremacy; that the interests of the minority in Ireland were left unprotected; that the land question was not settled; and that the Nationalists were left free to carry out doctrines with regard to the land, property, and government, which were wholly inconsistent with any government whatever. Practically the whole session was devoted to the consideration of the Bill. The Government repeatedly changed front upon clauses of vital importance, and were not unfairly accused of roaming about from side to side, without any definite convictions. Every revolt on the part of the Irish members was followed by surrender. Many of the changes Mr. Gladstone accepted were in

contradiction to other parts of the Bill and to all the principles of his political life. Mr. Chamberlain, whose attacks upon the measure were not less able than bitter, declared that the "British Empire was being sold by private treaty," and, referring to the retention of eighty Irish members in the House of Commons, said, the issue was whether the interests of Great Britain were "to be controlled by delegates from Ireland nominated by priests, elected by illiterates, and subsidised by the enemies of our country." Many deplorable scenes took place in the House. Party passion ran even higher than in 1886, and the final separation of Mr. Chamberlain and the leading Liberal Unionists from their former colleagues was completed. The second and third readings of the Bill were carried by majorities of 43 and 41, and early in September the measure was sent to the House of Lords, where it was thrown out by 419 votes to 41, on the motion of the Duke of Devonshire, who, while Lord Hartington, had been one of Mr. Gladstone's closest friends. The majority was the largest ever recorded in the history of Parliament. Events proved that in this instance at least the irresponsible Chamber reflected the feeling of the country more accurately than the House of Representatives. No agitation followed the action of the House of Lords, not a word of protest was raised against their decision.

Parliament adjourned till November, when its sittings were resumed, but only a languid interest was taken in its proceedings. It appeared as though the longer the two Houses sat, the less useful legislation it was possible for the Government to accomplish. The session which began in January, 1893, was prolonged till March 5th, 1894. Of the many measures introduced not one of importance was added to the

Statute Book. Owing to their determination to enforce the principle of compulsion, the Bill for restricting the hours of labour in mines, and the Employers Liability Bill, had to be abandoned. Even the Parish Councils Bill, which completed the system of local self-government in England begun by the establishment of County Councils, was only carried with difficulty. In spite of the unrivalled skill and experience of Mr. Gladstone as a leader, the Government seemed unable to avoid exasperating its friends as well as its foes. The futile labours of the Ministry were not inaptly compared to the punishment of prisoners who have to work a crank, knowing well that nothing will come of their labours.

With the close of this melancholy and unprofitable session Mr. Gladstone retired from the leadership of his party, and was succeeded by Lord Rosebery. The event will always be a memorable one in political history. In an eloquent tribute to the work of the veteran Liberal leader, Lord Salisbury spoke of Mr. Gladstone's as "the most brilliant intellect that has been placed at the service of the State since parliamentary government began." Everyone, said Lord Rosebery, can appreciate "the greatness of Mr. Gladstone's character and attainments, but there is one aspect of his career which makes his retirement especially pathetic and interesting,—I mean the long reach over which his recollection passes. He heard the guns saluting the battle of Waterloo, he heard some of Mr. Canning's greatest speeches, he heard the Reform debate in 1831 in this House, and Lord Brougham's memorable speech. He was, over half a century ago, the right-hand man of Sir Robert Peel's famous Government; and when to this coating of history he acquired so long ago, is added his

own transcendent personality, one cannot help being reminded of some noble river that has gathered its colours from the various soils through which it has passed, but has preserved its identity unimpaired, and gathered itself into one splendid volume before it rushes into the sea."

Parliament reassembled for the new session on March 12th, 1894. Lord Rosebery declared that the party, of which he was now the leader, occupied the same position as before. There had been no change of measures, and he and his colleagues remained pledged to the policy laid down by Mr. Gladstone in the previous year. But with a change of leader the capacity of the Government for accomplishing useful work was not extended. During the remainder of this year many measures were proposed but not one of importance was carried. The eight-hours' day was introduced into the Royal dockyards and arsenals, and a regulation was made requiring Government contractors to pay their men the union rate of wages. Nearly the whole session was occupied by the consideration of Sir William Harcourt's Budget, which, for the first time, adopted the democratic principle of graduated taxation. While refusing to apply this principle to the income tax on the ground of the difficulty and uncertainty of its assessment and collection, Sir W. Harcourt appeased the demands of the Radicals by devising a drastic scheme of graduated death duties. He laid it down as a principle that a man's title to his property ceases with his death. The property, whatever might be its form, could only pass to the heirs or assigns by a grant from the State, and before making a fresh grant the State had an anterior title to what it might consider its share over any claimants by descent or by testament. The

numerous probate and estate duties, presenting "an extraordinary specimen of tessellated legislation," which had grown up by piecemeal, were consolidated into one duty called the Estate Duty, and fused also the legacy and succession duties, placing both real and personal property, both settled and unsettled property on the same footing. In all cases the Duty is levied on the *corpus*, or capital value of the property devolving at death. The scale by which the duties were graduated was a drastic one, and inflicted much greater hardship upon persons of moderate means than upon the rich. Only estates of a capital value of under £500 were allowed to escape by the payment of a duty of one per cent. Estates between £500 and £1,000 pay two per cent; from £1,000 to £10,000 three per cent; and so on up to eight per cent on estates of over a million.

Early in the session of 1895 it became evident that the Government was falling to pieces. The discordant elements of which it was composed had become irreconcilable. Nothing short of the personality of Mr. Gladstone could hold together such conflicting forces. The crisis came unexpectedly. A motion declaring that an insufficient amount of cordite and other small arms ammunition had been stored, was carried on June 21st by a majority of seven, and the Ministry collapsed. Lord Salisbury took office, and Mr. Chamberlain, following the example of the Duke of Devonshire, joined the new Government, and was made Secretary for the Colonies. The following month Parliament was dissolved. If the result of the previous general election left a doubt as to whether the nation approved of Home Rule, it was removed by the verdict now recorded at the polls. At former elections large numbers of voters had sup-

ported Mr. Gladstone against their own convictions. The veteran leader inspired a confidence and trust never extended to any other British statesman. That great influence had now been removed, and the result was not less a surprise to the friends than to the opponents of Home Rule. The Unionists were returned with the overwhelming majority of 152. In the new Parliament there were 340 Conservatives, 71 Liberal Unionists, 177 Liberals who supported Home Rule, 70 Anti-Parnellites, and 12 Parnellites, or 411 Unionists against 259 Home Rulers. Since 1832, when the Liberals, after the passing of the first Reform Bill, were returned by a majority of 370, no such defeat had been suffered by either party. In the fourteen general elections held between 1835 and 1892, the successful party had only on four occasions obtained a majority of more than a hundred over its opponents.

The fact that more than half the members of the new House of Commons were Conservatives, paved the way for a fusion with the Liberal Unionists, who during the previous nine years had extended a generous and patriotic support to these nominal allies. With their former colleagues, the Radicals under Mr. Chamberlain, and the Whigs under the Duke of Devonshire, had long ceased to be in sympathy. The old party names had lost their meaning. To very many Liberals, the Newcastle programme of Mr. Morley appeared mischievous, and in conflict with the essential principles of liberalism. Home Rule was still its chief plank, and was associated with demands for the annihilation of the House of Lords, the disestablishment of the Church, the compulsory restriction of the hours of all labour, and the enforcement of a hard and fast scheme of liability of em-

ployers for accidents to their workmen, which would destroy the many excellent and powerful voluntary organisations which exist in centres of industry. In attempting to carry these and other changes, the new Liberals had appealed to the passions, the prejudices, the worst instincts of the masses. But the appeal had been made in vain. The great Liberal party had abandoned their principles of righteousness and justice, and had deservedly been cut off "even in the blossom of their sins." Time has as yet failed to retrieve the disaster. The close of the century unfortunately sees the second great party in the State divided, and demoralised, and without a leader to take the place of Mr. Gladstone.

In 1895, the ill-treatment and massacre of the Christian population in Turkey threatened to re-open the Eastern question. Many horrible outrages occurred in Armenia, for the good government of which England had pledged herself under the Convention of 1878. To the united representations of Great Britain, France, and Russia, the Sultan turned a deaf ear. At a meeting held at Chester under the presidency of the Duke of Westminster, Mr. Gladstone once more denounced the iniquity of Turkish rule, "the worst on the face of the earth," in a speech full of fire and eloquence. But neither the force of public opinion nor the efforts of Lord Salisbury led to any practical results. And during the following year a terrible massacre of Armenians in Constantinople, and also in the Anatolian provinces, roused public indignation in England to a high pitch. It was computed that in the streets of Constantinople alone, from 5,000 to 7,000 unoffending persons were killed. In a letter written early in September, Mr. Gladstone gave expression to the popular sentiment.

Indignation meetings were held in London and the provinces. Mr. Gladstone again lifted up his voice on behalf of oppressed humanity. On the 24th of September, although in his 87th year, he attended a non-party meeting at Liverpool, and spoke with remarkable vigour. While he thought ministers had acted rightly in seeking to maintain the Concert of Europe; he urged the Government to take every step that was possible, to put an end to a terrible evil. Under the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878 we had the right to coerce the Porte; and come what might, we should extricate ourselves from an ambiguous position, and refuse to stand neutral in the face of the most terrible and the most monstrous series of proceedings that had ever been recorded in the dismal and deplorable history of human crime. In an article in the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Gladstone urged that we had bound ourselves in the face of the world to secure good government for Armenia and for Asiatic Turkey; and if we failed to fulfil our solemn pledges the old word "honour" should be effaced from our dictionaries and dropped from our language.

With its large and homogeneous majority the Government has been able to accomplish many notable reforms. An Irish Land Bill introduced by Mr. Gerald Balfour in 1896, was eventually carried in a much altered form. The aim of the measure is to promote the more rapid and effective working of the Irish Land Purchase Acts of 1885 and 1891, and thus to extinguish the dual ownership created by Mr. Gladstone's legislation. If the Act does not reduce agricultural rents to the prairie value desired by Mr. Parnell, it carries on the process of confiscating the rights and property of the ill-fated Irishland-

lord with a success that must be gratifying to the enemies of the "English garrison." In 1897, measures were passed extending much more generous assistance to voluntary schools, and to the necessitous Board Schools of rural districts and poor localities.

The Employers' Liability Act of 1897, for which Mr. Chamberlain was chiefly responsible, is one of the most important measures passed during the century. It introduced a new principle, which now accepted as just and proper, would only a few years before have been repudiated by both parties. The contention of the Government was that an employer should consider compensation to workmen for accidental injury to be as much a charge upon his business as the outlay for the repair of machinery. Instead of imposing the burden for compensation upon the community as a whole, the Act throws it upon the particular industry, the pursuit of which occasions the accident. Ultimately the entire charge, it is believed, will become an addition to the cost of production, and will thus be shared by employers, workmen, and consumers. If that prove to be the case, British industries will, of course, to a small, but not it is hoped a material extent, be handicapped in competition with those of foreign countries, where the State has not interfered in a similar manner. But in the first instance the compensation is imposed upon the employer, who is able to secure ample protection at a relatively small cost by means of insurance. Workmen disabled through accident receive half their wages during the period of disablement. When an accident causes death, the representative of the worker is entitled to recover from the employer three years' wages, or £150, which ever is the larger, so long

as the total does not exceed £300. Contracting out of the Act is permitted when the Registrar-General of Friendly Societies certifies that the advantages to the men are not less than those secured by the law. In settling claims for compensation, both employer and workman are relieved of all expense. If the amount cannot be agreed upon between them it is settled by arbitration, or in the last resort, by the County Court Judge, the cost being borne by the State. The workman is not deprived of any right he may possess under the common law to recover damages caused by the wilful and wrongful act of an employer, or his agent, but compensation cannot be claimed both under the common law and the Employers' Liability Act. At present the Act is confined to the chief trades in which workmen are exposed to accidents; but its provisions will probably be extended at an early date to all industries. The most important exceptions are merchant-shipping and agriculture. Though the construction of many of its clauses has caused confusion and a large amount of litigation in the higher courts, the Act unquestionably has justified Mr. Chamberlain's hopes, and has conferred a great and an almost unexampled boon upon the working classes.

By the death of Mr. Gladstone on May 19th, 1898, the greatest figure of the century in political life was removed. The event deeply moved not only the British nation but the civilised world, and the fortitude and resignation with which he bore his latter months of unspeakable pain and distress, heightened the veneration which all men felt for one who was not of an age but for all time. His funeral in Westminster Abbey was a solemn and impressive service,

which was attended by the members of both Houses of Parliament, and representatives of every section of the nation.

An Act passed in 1898, extended to Ireland, with certain modifications, the same system of local self-government that had previously been granted to England and Scotland. In its main features the measure was the same as that introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Balfour in 1892. Before the passing of this Act there was practically no system of free local self-government in Ireland. Counties were ruled by grand juries, the members of which were nominated by the High Sheriff, mostly from among the larger landowners. It was a thoroughly antiquated feudal system, even more out of harmony with the spirit of the age, than the administrative Quarter Sessions which had been swept away in England. The new Act created throughout Ireland County Councils, Urban District Councils, Rural District Councils, and Boards of Guardians, as the various local authorities, all of which are elected by ballot every three years on the Parliamentary franchise, extended so as to include peers and women. The fiscal and administrative duties of the grand juries are transferred to the County Councils, but not their powers connected with the administration of the criminal law. But a provision handing over the duty of granting compensation for injuries to the County Courts, removed serious opposition to the grand jury system being allowed to continue. The work of the baronial authorities are transferred to the District Councils. Aldermen and *ex officio* members, and ministers of religion, have no place in the new bodies; and the poor law system administered by the Boards of Guardians is much

modified by the abolition of all official members. Restrictions are provided to prevent the elective bodies imposing undue burdens upon the landlords, and generous contributions from the Imperial Treasury are made in relief of local rates. It is significant that the Irish Local Government Act was carried without bitter recrimination, being viewed with favour by the Nationalists and nearly all members of the House of Commons. By passing the measure the Unionists fulfilled their pledges, and have probably placed Home Rule in the old sense of the term, outside the range of practical politics for ever.

Several other measures of importance were passed in 1898. The Benefices Bill removed some serious abuses in the system of Church patronage. It put an end to the sale of next presentations, and greatly restricted the conditions under which advowsons can be sold. The regulations against simony were rendered much more stringent. Imperial penny postage was established between the United Kingdom, Canada, Newfoundland, the Cape of Good Hope, Natal, and other parts of the Empire, and in time will be arranged with all British Colonies. Provisions were made for the creation of a Board of Education with a Minister as its chief, which will take charge of elementary and secondary education, absorb the Science and Art Department, and abolish the jealousies, over-lapping, and competition that existed between Government departments, Technical Education Authorities, and School Boards. Under the new Board it is hoped that the confusion which has hitherto existed in Elementary Education, the want of any organised system of Secondary Education, and the many other causes which have largely paralysed the efforts to place National Education upon a broad

and satisfactory basis will be removed. The Marriage Act of 1898 removed a grievance of long standing. It enables marriages to be solemnised in Non-conformist places of worship without the attendance of the official registrar, who had never been required to be present at such services held in the Established Church. By the Criminal Evidence Act every person charged with an offence, and the wife or husband, as the case may be, of the person so charged, is permitted to give evidence for the defence,—an important reform in legal procedure which had long been urged by many eminent jurists.

The numerous bills passed in 1899 included measures creating a Department of Agriculture and other industries and of Technical Instruction in Ireland; raising the age at which children may be withdrawn from elementary schools, from eleven to twelve; making better provision for local government in the administrative county of London, by the division of the county (exclusive of the ancient City of London) into metropolitan boroughs, each with a municipal council; extending further protection to the children of pauper or vicious parents; rendering the provision of seats for all female shop assistants compulsory; increasing the stringency of the Acts against the adulteration of food and drugs; and facilitating the acquisition of small houses by the poorer classes by means of loans from local authorities. During the sessions of 1898 and 1899 an unusually large number of useful measures, calculated to promote the moral, intellectual, and material improvement of the people, were added to the Statute Book.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEMOCRACY AND FEDERATION. •

THERE is nothing of deeper significance, nothing more memorable in the history of the nineteenth century, than the rise and development of democracy. Here, at least, history has not repeated itself. We may search the records of former ages in vain for any parallel to modern democracy. It is of itself a thing apart. It has nothing in common with the ancient democracies, which at best were little more than oligarchies. Under them the toiling masses were slaves, and had no share of political power. Mediaeval democracies were in nearly every instance concerned with the government of the city and not of the State, and though many privileges had been extended to the people, they were almost as far off as ever from the enjoyment of the power which the nineteenth century has placed in their hands. None the less, the vast change that has occurred is the result not of any sudden transformation, but of a gradual process of development which has been carried on for centuries, and might be traced step by step through history.

In only a limited sense can modern democracy be said to have had its origin in the French Revolution. If that tremendous eruption of the repressed forces of humanity had never taken place, the dawn of liberty might have been delayed,—it could not have been long deferred. Though events in France at the

end of the eighteenth century profoundly stirred the feelings of the British people, the most valuable lessons taught them by the Revolution were of a negative and not a positive character. The ideals which inspired the French were lost sight of in the gloom of the excesses and extravagances of those stormy times. To the majority of the English people, events in France were only a terrible warning that though a revolution may remove abuses, it cannot prevent others springing up in their place. In the case of human society, as with the individual, there is no effectual means of instantaneous conversion. If any enduring change is to be wrought it must be a gradual one. The great moral, social, and material gains which have been achieved by the growth of democracy under the British flag, are the result of time, of the patient but ceaseless efforts of a people working out their destiny upon the lines of constitutional progress.

The tendency of British democracy is constructive, not destructive. Timid minds may be alarmed because the old order changes, giving place to new, but unless the experience of the century is to be entirely falsified by future events, there is no need to fear a lack of conservative instinct, of reverence for everything that deserves veneration, among the mass of the British people. Anarchism, with its denial of all government, and its pandemonium of license, which would permit every man to be a law unto himself, has not touched them. They have no sympathy with Socialism, which would reduce everything to chaos in order to recreate a new and regenerate world, in which everyone would have enough and none too much, the amount being strictly regulated in accor-

dance with the ideas of writers who wish to make all mankind submit to the ordeal of the procrustean bed.

The cry that the tendency of legislation is in the direction of socialism is founded upon a confusion of terms. For many years the word socialism has ceased to convey any definite idea. It is used in the most conflicting senses. The fundamental principle which underlies the writings of Lassalle, Marx, and other dangerous political guides, is that "the present system of industry, which is carried on by private competing capital, served by competitive wage-labour, must be superseded by a system of free associated workers, utilising a collective capital with a view to an equitable system of distribution. On this theory private capital will be abolished, and rent, and interest will cease." That is the dream of the Socialist, who makes the ideal his starting point, and not, what it ought to be, the goal of his action. He wants to destroy, in order that he may reconstruct the world in accordance with his preconceived ideas. He takes no account of the limitations and inherent inequalities of humanity; and he conveniently ignores the principles which determine social development.

Political progress has brought with it, or, more correctly speaking, has resulted from a marvellous change in ideas upon almost every question affecting the people. To describe the essential principles upon which much of the legislation of late years has proceeded, a new name is needed. The old terms Liberalism and Conservatism have lost their significance, and even if they had not, would be as unsuitable as Whig and Tory. In endeavouring to find an appropriate name for the new principles underlying recent legislation, we are frequently driven to use

the term socialism. But from socialism, in the sense just defined, British legislation is cut off by a whole diameter. There has been no attempt made by Parliament to vest the instruments of production in the State, so that it may administer them equally for the benefit of all its members. The acquisition of tramways, water, gas and electric lighting works, by municipalities, is not due to the acceptance of the essential principles of socialism. It would be more correct to affirm that the forces which promote these important movements are opposed to socialism. The object is not to remove incentives to individual effort, not to impose restrictions upon the ambition which always has been, and always will be, the mainspring of human endeavour, but by improving the conditions under which the mass of the people exist, to enlarge the opportunities of each citizen to fight the battle of life successfully, and carve out for himself the career for which he is best fitted by ability and temperament. Competition is not being removed, but the conditions under which competition takes place are being equalised. The profits from industries owned and managed by municipalities are not handed over to the workers, who according to the socialists are entitled to the whole product of their labour. On the contrary, the profits are expended in reducing the rates, and in making public improvements, which are enjoyed by all, and from which rich and poor derive benefit.

The whole tendency of democracy is not only to give the widest possible liberty to each citizen to shape his own career, but to encourage and aid him to become the owner, in whole or in part, of the house he lives in, of the land he tills, of the mine, the factory, and the workshop where he is employed.

Instead of an attempt to replace the individual capitalist by the State, the power of the State is every year being more largely used to multiply the small capitalist, who under increasingly favourable conditions is left free to work out his own salvation, and to become rich if he can. British democracy is, therefore, opposed to the false ideal of reducing everyone to an equality, and preventing one individual becoming wealthier than another. It is developing, not on the principles urged by Lassalle, and Marx, but upon the lines foreseen by De Tocqueville, whose definition of the difference between the aims of socialism and democracy is as true to-day as it was in 1849. "Democracy," he says, "extends the sphere of individual independence; socialism contracts it. Democracy gives every individual man his utmost value; socialism makes every man an agent, an instrument, a cipher. Democracy and socialism coincide only in the single word equality, but observe the difference: democracy desires equality in liberty; socialism seeks equality in compulsion and servitude."

Under the guise of equality socialism seeks to inflict injustice. It is not content, like democracy, to use the powers of the State for the solution of the wants of the people, and to achieve the greatest happiness of the greatest number. A practical application of the theories of Lassalle and Marx would not elevate humanity to a higher plane, but would drag mankind down to a lower level, where the industrious would never be allowed to rise above the indolent, where the capable man would be held in no more value than the incompetent, where the creative artist and the scientific investigator, would have no inducement to extend the bounds of human knowledge, that was not shared by the hewers of wood and drawers

of water, where the skilled artisan and the intelligent mechanic would be placed on the same footing with the unskilled labourer and the ignorant navvy.

To a nation which had lost its vigour, and was hastening to decay, the chilling creed of the socialist, founded on the false assumption that mankind can not only be reduced to the dead level of mediocrity, but can be kept there, might in the last stages of its decrepitude, prove alluring. But it has no attraction for a people whose vigour is unimpaired, whose vitality is undiminished, whose aspirations have not been turned into dead sea fruit. Socialism is repugnant to the feelings of the British people, in conflict with their instincts, and opposed to all the principles for which they have so long and patiently struggled. Had socialism obtained in England in the past, the Anglo-Saxon race would never have achieved its world-wide influence. England, as Mr. John Rae justly argues, owes "her whole industrial greatness, her manufactures, her banks, her shipping, her railways, to some extent her Colonial possessions, to the unassisted energy of her private citizens." A people reared in the great principles of freedom will never exchange their liberty as individuals for the iron rule of a socialistic despotism.

The dominant principle of recent democratic legislation is that justice and humanity ought to govern in economic affairs, as they have always been supposed to govern in the other affairs of life. In its application, this remarkable principle has not yet reached its full development. To what results it may ultimately lead, who can say? That it will bring about even more important changes in the existing state of society than we have yet witnessed, there appears no reason to doubt. Though the logical out-

come of the labours of enlightened statesmen of both parties during the past century, the new doctrine, in its practical working, conflicts not less with the principles of the old Liberalism than with those of Conservatism. Little more than a generation ago, freedom of contract, the rights of property, the liberty of the individual, were among the essential articles of the Liberal faith. But it is now a matter of daily occurrence for Parliament to restrict freedom of contract, interfere with the rights of property, restrain the liberty of the individual, where the welfare of any considerable section of the community is concerned.

In doing this the State has made no new departure. It has merely changed its point of view. Instead of legislating for the few, it has adopted the humane and just view that the object of the State should be to promote the welfare of the many. It has not ceased to protect the classes, but it no longer does so at the expense of the masses. Having declared against the exploitation of man by man by means of slavery and serfdom; the State was to awaken in the nineteenth century to the necessity of further protecting the weak, and putting restraints upon the exploitation of man, the wage-earner, by man the capitalist, whose well-being had hitherto been its chief solicitude. The changed conditions of society and industry had brought with them evils, which, if not as intolerable as those associated with forced labour, were of a magnitude that no civilised form of government, much less a Christian one, could long ignore.

In 1349 the State fixed the wages of labourers in the interests of the ruling classes. This was superseded during the reign of Elizabeth by a statute im-

posing an apprenticeship of seven years, and empowering the Justices in Quarter Sessions to fix the rate of wages both in husbandry and handicraft. In process of time the law was largely superseded by local customs. These were not always in favour of the labourers, who repeatedly complained at the beginning of the present century that they could not get their wages revised. The great industrial revolution, which began in the eighteenth century, had brought with it a corresponding change in the relations between capital and labour. With the introduction of machinery and the establishment of factories, there arose a pressing need for some system which would supply the protection against oppression afforded workmen by the Trade Guilds, which had ceased to exercise any influence. Trade unionism sprang up, and the labourers attempted to secure their demands by association. But the State immediately interfered, and, for the benefit of employers, passed the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800.

These laws, which rendered combination penal, pressed with great hardship upon the labouring classes. While they were strictly enforced against workmen, employers were frequently allowed to combine for their mutual benefit. The Statute of Elizabeth was repealed in 1814, but it was not till 1824 that a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to inquire into the working of the Combination Acts. In their report, the Committee stated that the administration of the law had been one-sided, and that the restrictions against combination resulted in secret societies, distrust, irritation, and violence. In accordance with the recommendations in the report, the Combination Acts were repealed; but owing to the

occurrence of numerous strikes, repressive laws were re-enacted in 1825. Under the new law, workmen might assemble to determine their own wages, but any agreement "affecting the wages or hours of work of persons not present at the meeting," all agreements for "controlling a master in the management of his business," for persuading persons to leave their employment, or not to work for any particular master or company, were made illegal conspiracies. "In fact, there was scarcely an act performed by any workman, as the member of a trade union, which was not an act of conspiracy and a misdemeanour." But in spite of these and other repressive Acts, trade unionism continued to grow. A Royal Commission, appointed in 1867, reported that the majority of the Unions had nothing illegal in their working, and advised the repeal of the severe laws of 1825, and subsequent years. The Trade Union Act passed in 1871, during Mr. Gladstone's first administration, rendered the position of the Unions legal; and the last vestiges of the Combination Acts were swept away under Mr. Disraeli's Government in 1875.

Legalised and protected by the State, placed on a footing of equality with other voluntary associations, granted protection for their funds and their property, Trades Unions have become a scarcely less important factor in politics than in industry. That these great labour organisations should make mistakes is inevitable. But on the whole, their influence has been a beneficial one. They sprang up originally, to meet the need of protecting the weak against the strong, and though the scope of their operations has been greatly extended, their chief objects are still to raise and maintain wages at the highest possible level, to reduce the hours of labour, regulate over-time, and

piece-work, and to secure the toiler against the caprice and oppression of the employer. At first these and other objects were secured by strikes and lock-outs. But with the growth of the Unions, the increase in the resources they command, and the great change that has taken place in public opinion, the influence of which becomes more potent as the years go by, the tendency is to resort less to force, and to replace strikes by boards of conciliation and arbitration. In some of the chief industries, notably in the coal, iron, and steel trades, wages are automatically regulated by sliding-scales, under which the remuneration of the workers rise or fall, as the prices received by the capitalist advance or recede.

There is another aspect of Trades Unions, which are very far from being merely organisations for enforcing what are regarded as the just claims of labour. Long before they were removed from under the ban of the law, the great industrial organisations extended to their members many of the benefits to be derived from co-operation. The poor were enabled to tide over times of distress; the sick were succoured, the aged and infirm provided for, the victims of accident and adversity were assisted, and provision made against many of the ills of life that especially fall to the lot of the poor. All this was done without the taint of pauperism, thus preserving the self-respect of the members and of their families. Nor must the influence of Trades Unions be ignored in the promotion of temperance, and thrift, the teaching of self-discipline, and the inculcation of that spirit of self-respect and manly independence, which are among the priceless possessions of a free people.

Co-operation, which grew up side by side with trade unionism, has developed in Great Britain on

the lines of distribution rather than of production. Over one-sixth of the population has its wants supplied in whole, or in part, by co-operation. Of the societies associated with the Co-operative Union the annual production exceeds five millions a year in value. But this is only an infinitesimal part of what is being accomplished by co-operation by less direct methods. Joint Stock Companies are often only co-operative societies under another name. Their tendency is entirely democratic. The results by which wealth was formerly concentrated in the hands of the few, are being achieved by the union and multiplication of small capitalists, under the title of Limited Liability Companies, and the creation of schemes of profit-sharing, which secure to the workers a direct participation in the fruits of their industry.

The triumph of Catholic Emancipation, and the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, by which the balance of power was transferred from the aristocracy to the middle classes, were speedily followed by a great change in the relations between the State and the people. Instead of regarding nearly every question from the standpoint of the capitalist, Parliament began to take a broader view, which was enlarged with each extension of the franchise. Interest was awakened in national education. It was no longer possible for the legislature to regard with apathy the ignorance in which the mass of the people had been allowed to remain. Inquiry was stimulated, money was voted, and a National Council was formed to regulate and extend public instruction. The wants and grievances of the labouring classes were investigated, and remedies proposed. Instead of endeavouring to regulate employment in the interests of the capitalist, Parliament now began to legislate, not

against the privileged classes, but on behalf of the people. The dawn of a new era had come. In future, the State was to be the protector of the weak and oppressed. Its efforts were at first cautious and experimental. Interference with freedom of contract, restriction of the hours of labour, the regulation of the sanitary condition of factories and workshops, were only made in the interests of little children and young girls. But the benefits of such legislation were so obvious that they were speedily extended to women; and then, step by step, to every class of adult worker. To-day the State employs an army of experts, to see that the laws passed to protect the toiling millions are obeyed. The worker is not only protected against the employer, he is in many instances protected against himself. Women and children are no longer free to slave an unlimited number of hours every day in their endeavour to secure the means of subsistence.

Though Great Britain has not been in the van of progress in legislating on behalf of children, the ægis of the law is rapidly being extended over the child, with whose welfare the State is bound, both by justice and by the force of self-preservation, to concern itself. There is no attempt to interfere with parental rights; the efforts to remove parental responsibility are happily few. But among the great changes political progress has brought about, is the recognition of the fact that children have rights as well as adults, and that it is the duty of the State to enforce the observance of those rights. Every child is a subject of the King, and is therefore entitled to the protection of the law. Children may no longer be starved, neglected, and cruelly ill-treated, with impunity. They may not be denied the benefits of

an education which will enable them to become useful citizens. Their capacity as wage-earners may no longer be turned to unlimited account by brutal, lazy, and criminal parents. But much still remains to be accomplished. In the task of protecting the helpless against the oppressor, the State under the pressure of a more enlightened public opinion will soon be forced to make the welfare of the child its especial care. Nothing less than a Department of State, with a Minister directly responsible to the representatives of the people for the life and well-being of every child, will satisfy the demands of reformers who are aware of the terrible abuses that still exist. But before this can be obtained the conscience of the people must be awakened. Parliament will never devote its best energies to the solution of the serious problems that exist, until the people are aroused. Children cannot by speeches plead on their own behalf; they have no votes which the politician is eager to obtain; they cannot organise themselves into unions to resist the wrongs too often inflicted upon them by their natural protectors. But the cry of thousands of helpless little children goes up daily to Heaven, and the anguish and suffering of which they are the victims, will one day come home to the democracy, and call forth an irresistible demand for redress.

The results achieved by political progress during the century amount to little less than a revolution. Religious disabilities have been removed, and liberty of conscience secured. Equality before the law has been established in theory, though in practice there is still room for improvement. Political power has been extended to the mass of the people. Free education has been provided at the expense of the State.

The largest possible amount of freedom has been granted to each individual citizen. While the bounds of liberty have been enlarged, the abuses arising from license have been restricted. The old doctrines of *laissez-faire*, and legislative non-intervention, have been discarded. Slowly, but steadily, the State has extended its control over every branch of industry with the objects of checking the abuse of power, of lessening the evils of competitive labour, of securing the safety and preserving the health of the worker, of protecting the weaker classes in what Adam Smith calls "an undeformed and un mutilated manhood."

Intervention by Government in all these matters was necessitated by the growth of society. The development of the vast and complex system of modern industry, and the increase and concentration of population, made it impossible for the State to stand aloof. But in legislating for the protection of the toiling millions, Parliament has violated no principle of British freedom. It has not even made the new and startling departure which some alarmists would have us believe. For centuries the State had never hesitated to interfere where intervention was deemed necessary in the interest of the nation. Its intervention had too often been in the interest of the ruling classes. But that was a natural and inevitable result as long as political power was concentrated in the hands of the aristocracy. It was only when the power of the State began to be exerted for the protection of large sections of the nation, for limiting the rights and enforcing the responsibilities of property, that an outcry was raised. Mr. Herbert Spencer declared that British freedom was lost, and warned us to prepare for "the coming slavery." But

though the State has continued to pursue its policy of interference with undiminished vigour, there still appears to be an abundance of British freedom, and if the new conditions under which we live are those of "slavery," that institution has been greatly trampled in the past. Which is the more intolerable "slavery," the state of things that prevailed under the laws which made combination penal, or that which has resulted from the legalization of trades unions? The condition of the men, women, and children, who worked in mines, factories, and workshops without State protection, or of the toilers of to-day, who, under the provisions of the numerous Acts passed for their benefit, are by the power of the State safeguarded at every turn? The position of workmen formerly, whose families were left without provision when the bread-winners were disabled or killed by accident in following dangerous employment, or, that of labourers who receive under the Employers' Liability Act half their wages during disablement, and have their families partly provided for in the case of accidents that end fatally? We are far from ignoring the dangers connected with State interference. They are many, and the danger of the rights of the minority being extinguished by the will of the majority, is one that should never be lost sight of. But, up to the present, the tendency of British democracy has not been to set up universal State action in the place of individual liberty, or to deprive any class of its just rights and privileges.

It is profoundly significant that during the last half century, Parliament has been guided more by ethical than by economic considerations. Justice and humanity, the obligations of our higher nature, the duty of a Christian State to the people, have been

the tremendous motive power which has forced through Parliament act after act for protecting the people, ameliorating their condition, and supplying them with many means of mental, moral, and material improvement. The Factory Acts, the Education Acts, the Health and Dwelling Acts, the establishment of free libraries, free picture galleries, free parks, are reforms inspired by moral influences, rather than by considerations of political economy. It is the bringing of the great forces of moral and philanthropic feeling to bear upon the legislature, the appeal to the conscience as well as to the intellect of statesmen, that has resulted in the framing of so large a number of statutes for the benefit of the poorer classes of the community.

Though we may deny that the British Parliament, in extending and establishing popular rights, has encroached upon the principle of individual freedom, what were at one time regarded as the inalienable rights and privileges of property have been considerably curtailed. The movement will probably go much further. Those directly concerned naturally regard it as an infringement of their rights. But, if we except the Irish Land Acts, we doubt whether any measure passed by Parliament can be said to have trenched upon the just rights of the individual. The assertion made by partisans that the tendency of recent legislation is towards confiscation, is scarcely worthy of notice. If the people were polled upon the question to-morrow they would repudiate, almost unanimously, any wish to interfere with private property. They would do so, because being a people full of life and vigour, it is the hope, and the aim of each member of the community, to acquire property of his own.

In the progress of civilisation, private property always has been and, as far as we can see, always will be one of the most important factors. If its rights have been restricted, and are likely to be still further curtailed, it is not that the nation is opposed to private wealth, in any form, but because under the conditions resulting in a State which has slowly and peacefully emerged from feudalism into democracy, property in many instances enjoyed undue powers, and unfair advantages. Many of the reforms which were strenuously resisted at first, were finally carried without any opposition. The class affected had become more enlightened. Take, for example, the old law of land entail. Under its provisions, large quantities of land were rendered useless. The tenant for life did not work the land, he could find no tenant who would take it, and except under almost impossible conditions, he could not sell it. This anomalous state of things was caused by some more or less remote proprietor having seen fit to entail the property upon generations at the time unborn. When the old law was finally swept away by Lord Cairns' Act, and the living were emancipated from the tyranny of the dead, no one rejoiced more than the representatives of the class who had formerly resisted the reform. Another illustration may be found in the Agricultural Holdings Act, which secured to British tenants compensation for improvements. The measure was at first resisted on the plea that it interfered with the rights of the owner. This was true; but it only took away from the landlord, property to which he had no moral right whatever. The share in the value of the soil conveyed from the landowner to the farmer, had been created by the tenant. It was the outcome of new and more scientific methods of agriculture. It

called for the constitution of a new kind of property, the property of a tenant-farmer in his own unexhausted improvements. The new law has worked admirably, but when the change was first proposed by Mr. Gladstone the usual cry of confiscation was raised by the class affected.

Democratic legislation has struck not at property, but at injustice. The privileged classes had so long been accustomed to be protected by the State against all comers, that they were slow to realise that under the altered conditions each section of the community would have its rights and privileges secured to it. Apart from this side of the question, the State insists with growing severity that the responsibilities of property shall be conscientiously discharged. Where this is done, there is little danger of legislative interference as between class and class. But in the relations between itself and the capitalist, the State has adopted entirely new ideas regarding property. The most striking example of this is afforded by the graduated Death Duties proposed by Sir William Harcourt. The equity of taxing the wealthy more heavily than the poor has long been admitted. The exemption always permitted under the Income Tax was practically an admission of the principle. If there is any objection to the graduated Death Duties it is not that they bear too heavily upon the rich or too lightly upon the poor, but that they are framed so as to press with special severity upon the class which just escapes poverty and misses riches altogether. A graduated Income Tax will probably be adopted in the near future; and the State will continue, by many other methods, to promote the distribution of wealth. Individual liberty will only be restricted where it injuriously affects the rights and well-being of others.

Every man will be left free to amass a great fortune, but the difficulties to be overcome in doing so will steadily increase, while the possibilities of each industrious and capable citizen acquiring a moderate competency will be correspondingly enlarged. By enabling every man to become a small capitalist, the causes of discontent are removed, the conservative instincts of the people strengthened, and the safety of society secured. Men will never become equal, mentally, physically, or financially. Great inequalities will remain; and life will continue to offer to the few, prizes which are beyond the reach of the many. But the inequalities will not be so great as in the past; the contrast between the conditions of life for the wealthy and for the poor will not be so glaring; for without entering upon a policy of injustice or confiscation, the State will use its vast powers to protect those who most need its assistance, and to secure to every citizen the essentials of life, and the means of moral, intellectual, and material improvement.

Out of these great results of the political progress of the century, have sprung others, which promise to be among the most memorable in the world's history. With the growth of democracy in Great Britain, has proceeded the development of democracy throughout the world wide possessions of the Crown. From the little island set in the silver sea, British "Parliamentary institutions have taken the wings of the morning and passed to the uttermost parts of the earth." At first each Colony was concerned in establishing itself; in setting its own house in order, that the inhabitants might enjoy the blessings of liberty and justice, which are associated with the presence of the British flag. With the accomplishment of that duty, new aspira-

tions arose. Blood claimed union with blood. The loyalists throughout British North America were no longer content to remain split up in isolated communities. Across a vast continent Quebec clasped hands with British Columbia. The provinces were confederated, and the Dominion sprang into existence. In this, as in many other things, Canada led the way. She was the first to realise the great idea of the confederation of self-governing democratic States. The example set in 1867 was destined to have a world wide influence. It quickened the pulse of national feeling in Australia, and awoke a desire for federal union among the British people of South Africa. But, in the latter country, the conditions were not favourable to the adoption of federation. A great change in the position of the different States was necessary, before the realisation of such high hopes could be effected; and the indiscreet action of the British Government in attempting to promote a union before the time was ripe, only led to misunderstanding and failure.

But in Australia the idea took root, and began to grow. It received a great impulse in 1883 by the action of Queensland in attempting to annex the large island of Papua, or New Guinea. The Colonies awoke to the danger of any foreign power being permitted to acquire possessions in the Southern Pacific, and to the importance of federal union for the protection of their own interests and those of the Empire. Though the Imperial Government were unable to sanction the action of Queensland, Lord Derby responded to the feeling expressed by all the Australian Colonies, by extending British jurisdiction over the southern coast of New Guinea, and asserting the pre-emptive claim of England to the island, by de-

declaring that an attempt by any other country to make a settlement on the coast would not be viewed as a friendly act. This fell far short of Australian demands. A scheme was submitted to the Colonial Office for the annexation not only of Papua, but of the New Hebrides, the Solomon Islands, and of a large number of little known islands in the neighborhood, and to north and north-east of Papua. Resolutions were passed by the Legislatures of the different Colonies concerned, calling upon the Imperial Government to occupy all the South Sea islands, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of other Powers. The demand was natural, but it was one much easier to make than to comply with; and the British Government urged that before the Mother Country took a step which might lead to grave consequences, the Australian Colonies should consolidate themselves into a powerful political union, and show that they could take under their care, and bear their share of the cost of the occupation, administration, and defence of the additional 300,000 square miles of territory which it was proposed should be added to the possessions of the Crown. These events led to the holding of an Intercolonial Conference in November, 1883, in order to discuss the policy of federation. It was decided that a Federal Council should be formed to deal with matters in which united action might be desirable. But the Colonies were still far from unanimous as to the lines upon which federation should proceed. Each Colony viewed with jealousy any invasion of its legislative powers and independence. New South Wales and New Zealand desired to have as loose and elastic a form of federation as possible. The other Colonies were in favour of making the union binding and

durable, and of entrusting the Federal Council with considerable powers. These divisions were not attended with happy results, and the Federal Council of Australasia as constituted by Act of the Imperial Parliament in 1885, only served to emphasize the necessity for a union founded on much sounder principles.

In spite of the reiterated representations of all the Australian Colonies, Germany was permitted by the Imperial Government, in 1884, to occupy the northern part of New Guinea. That this action should have exasperated the Colonial authorities is not surprising. They were certainly justified in complaining that the Colonies were subject to an "unqualified" and an "antiquated autocracy" in Imperial matters, which had sacrificed their interests without an effort, and had ignored the strong representations, which, for over eighteen months, the Colonial Governments had addressed to the Home Ministry. Here, as in everything else, the policy of the Liberal Ministry of 1880-85 resulted in disaster and humiliation. But the indignation aroused by their conduct induced the Gladstonian Government to abandon their apathetic policy, and endeavour to save to Australia the islands that remained. The protectorate over the Southern portion of New Guinea was enlarged so as to take in the north shore of East Cape as well as the adjacent islands, and the British flag was hoisted over the various islands of the Louisiade Archipelago, east of New Guinea, over Woodland Island to the north of these, and over the smaller Long and Rook Islands off the coast of the German Colony.

Though the Australian Federal Council, from which New South Wales, South Australia, and New Zealand held aloof, was unable to achieve very much

in the way of practical results, it had a great effect in strengthening the national spirit. In 1890, representatives of the Colonies unanimously adopted an address to the Queen, declaring that the best interests, and the present and future prosperity of the Australian Colonies would be promoted by an early union under the Crown, with a legislative and executive government. In the following year, a national Australasian Convention, composed of delegates from each Colony, was held at Sydney, and a Federal Constitution was framed, and adopted by an unanimous vote. By 26 votes to 13, the Convention decided that the name of the Confederation should be the Commonwealth of Australia. But, owing to various obstacles, and to the slowness of Parliamentary procedure, the cause of federation did not progress rapidly. At a Conference of the Premiers held at Hobart, in January, 1895, it was decided to abandon the Commonwealth Bill, to dispense as far as possible with parliamentary action, and to appeal by popular election to the voters of each Colony. To give validity to the proposed elections at which representatives were to be returned to a Federal Convention, the sanction of each Parliament was required. A measure known as the Federal Enabling Bill was drafted, and submitted to the several Colonial Legislatures. But the same difficulties as before were experienced in securing prompt and harmonious action on the part of the six Australian Parliaments. At the beginning of 1897, the Enabling Bill had been adopted by all the Colonies except Queensland, the elections were proceeded with, and the Federal Convention was created. During the next year, its members devoted their energies to the drafting of a new Federal Constitution, largely based upon the Com-

monwealth Bill as amended by the different Parliaments, and after many difficulties, a measure was framed, which, it was thought, effected a satisfactory compromise between the many conflicting interests. But when it was referred to a *plébiscite* in each Colony, in 1898, some of its provisions were strongly opposed in New South Wales, where it only escaped rejection by the narrow majority of 5,371 votes. Renewed conferences resulted in the drafting of a third measure, which, in 1899, was adopted by New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania, by 376,035 votes, against 131,181. In the form presented to the Imperial Parliament for ratification, the Commonwealth Bill provided for the creation of a Federal Parliament consisting of a Senate, to which each Colony will send six representatives elected for a term of six years: and a House of Representatives which will contain, as nearly as possible, double the number of members returned to the Senate, allotted to the Colonies according to population, no Colony to have less than five representatives. Taking the latest statistics of population available, we find, that under this arrangement the House of Representatives will be made up of 23 members returned by New South Wales; 20 by Victoria; 8 by Queensland; 6 by South Australia; and 5 by Tasmania; the proportion of representation being one member for about every fifty-nine thousand people. Under the Commonwealth, the Crown is represented by a Governor-General, with an Executive Ministry, who act as his advisers. A Supreme Court has been created for deciding all questions of law which do not affect other parts of the Empire. Free trade and intercourse is established between the federated Colonies, and among the powers with which

the Federal Parliament has been invested, are the imposition and collection of customs and excise, the control of naval and military defence, posts, telegraphs and telephones, lighthouses and other protection for shipping, and quarantine. As representative of the Crown, the Governor-General is Commander-in-Chief of the naval and military forces. The Australian Commonwealth Bill effects the settlement of a great question. Statesmen on both sides of the seas are equally concerned to render the measure worthy of the aspirations which it embodies, and of the race and Empire whose destinies it affects so closely.

With the growth of federation in Australasia, there sprang up another feeling which was not confined to any one portion of the Empire. The desire for a closer union between the Mother Country and the Colonies was shared by British people in every quarter of the globe. For many years, Imperial Federation was only a vague sentiment, a magnificent dream, which it was thought could never be realised. Many British statesmen argued that sooner or later the Colonies would demand complete independence, and that nothing was so likely to precipitate the disruption of the Empire as a European War. Was it likely, they asked, that Canada and Australia would be prepared to make material sacrifices to assist Great Britain if she became involved in a conflict which did not threaten the interests of those Colonies? Was it not much more probable that the Colonies would seek independence, in order to avoid being drawn into complications which must inevitably arise for a State whose interests were affected by European changes, and whose possessions were scattered over immense distances? But this cynical point of view ignored

the most potent forces that sway mankind. It took no account of sentiment,—the ties of blood, language, and religion, and the love of their native land with its great historic past, and its priceless services to civil and religious liberty, which British people carried with them to their new homes across the seas. The emigrants who left their native country in search of fortune, and are building up new States in other parts of the earth, departed not in anger but in sorrow. No harsh tyranny drove them forth from the land of their forefathers. They were not forced to seek in distant lands the freedom of conscience and the enjoyment of civil rights denied them by an iron despotism. But they went forth free-men of a free country, to carve out careers for themselves under other skies, watching the white cliffs of England recede from view with moist eyes, and hearts filled with grateful feelings for the land around which, under all vicissitudes of fortune, would gather the associations of home and love. Time did not dull nor distance dim their feelings of loyalty. They were still sons of the Empire, and they handed down unbroken and unimpaired, those great emotions of devotion to the throne, and veneration for the history of the British race, to their children's children.

“Dear are the lands where we were born
Where rest our honoured dead,
And rich and wide, on every side,
The fruitful pastures spread.
But dearer to our faithful hearts
Than home, or gold, or land,
Are Britain's laws and Britain's Crown,
And British flag of old renown,
And grip of British hands.”

There were other things beside sentiment which were also ignored by the statesmen of a past genera-

tion. Trade followed the flag. With the growth of the Colonies there sprang up great commercial bonds between the Mother Country and her distant possessions. Great Britain found new markets created for her manufactures, the Colonies found at home an ever growing demand for their products. Money was needed to develop the new lands, and in Colonial enterprise, British capital found a safe and profitable field for investment. The link of sentiment was strengthened by the bonds of material interest. By the marvellous progress of steam and electricity, the sense of distance was largely obliterated. Inter-course between the people at home and their brothers across the seas, stimulated feelings of loyalty and mutual respect. The sense of kinship was quickened: and the people in the old land were profoundly moved when it dawned upon them that the Colonists, far from wishing to cut themselves off from the Empire, clung to the British connection, and desired a closer political union which would give them a share in the control and responsibilities of a world-wide realm.

The Colonial feeling of loyalty to the Throne, which is the symbol of Imperial unity, has of recent years found many expressions in action. In 1884, Canada, where the Imperial instinct has always been so strong, sent a body of *voyageurs* to take part in the expedition up the Nile for the relief of Khartoum, and the attempt to save General Gordon. In the following year 800 volunteers from New South Wales took their place by the side of British troops at Suakim. That the futile and humiliating results of those disastrous years did not chill the feelings of devotion and self-sacrifice to the cause of the Empire, speaks volumes for the loyalty of the Colonies. The

growing sentiment in favour of Imperial unity was further fostered by the Colonial Exhibition of 1886, and by the demonstrations of loyalty in honour of the Jubilee of the Queen's reign in 1887. The Conference of specially appointed delegates from all parts, held in London, during that year, under the presidency of Mr. Chamberlain, led to results of which it is difficult to over estimate the importance. Not only did the discussion of questions connected with Imperial Federation, by politicians of the first rank from all parts of the Empire, clear away many misconceptions, and promote a better understanding of the practical difficulties which have to be faced and overcome before any scheme of Imperial unity can be realised, but a definite agreement was arrived at with regard to the problem of Colonial defence. Broadly speaking, the self-governing Colonies undertook to maintain an efficient force for their own defence by land. Great Britain agreed to provide a special squadron to afford additional protection for Australia, the cost of maintenance being borne by the Colonies interested; and the Mother Country also undertook to place the defence of the most important ports and coaling stations upon a satisfactory footing, and in other ways to strengthen the military and naval defences of the Empire. The impetus given to Imperial defence by the Conference of 1887, resulted in large additions being made to the Navy, upon the efficiency and capacity of which to cope with all possible hostile combinations, the supremacy and safety of the Empire depend.

Imperial Federation is still only a sentiment, but it is a very powerful one. Time is needed before a change of the greatest complexity and importance can be brought about. Like other momentous alter-

ations in the Constitution, the closer political union of the Empire must be the result of a gradual and natural growth. It cannot be forced, and the Mother Country does well to follow the lead of the Colonies, and not attempt to suggest, much less dictate to them, upon a matter that involves their individual liberties and responsibilities. But there is little doubt that Imperial unity will one day become an accomplished fact, and events at the close of the century suggest that the realisation of that great idea may not long be deferred.

In the history of political progress, the war in South Africa occupies an important place. It has created what Lord Rosebery described as "a great wind of Imperial spirit." If it has brought Imperial Federation a step nearer realisation, it has also taught the nation some bitter lessons by which we can scarcely fail to profit. The Transvaal was first occupied by the Boers in 1836. Fourteen years later, a still larger number of the Dutch, with whom hatred and distrust of England was a deep traditional sentiment, left Cape Colony and took up their residence in the country. By the Sand River Convention of 1852, Great Britain recognised the right of the Boers to manage their own affairs according to their own laws. But the Republic they established languished, and in 1876 was on the verge of bankruptcy and dissolution. Its condition was a menace to the peace of South Africa. There was danger that the natives, who had long suffered under the rule of the Boers, would rise in rebellion and massacre the white population in the Republic and the adjoining territory. To avert this catastrophe an appeal was made to the British Government. A special Commissioner was sent to ascertain the wishes of the people, and re-

ported that the condition of the Republic was so hopeless, and the situation so alarming, that the majority of the Boers desired annexation. There is little doubt that these representations faithfully reflected the feeling at the time. The country was annexed in 1877, Great Britain subjugated the rebellious natives, and a promise was made that a liberal system of local self-government should be established. Unfortunately there was delay in giving effect to this promise. The times were stormy ones; and the attention of both Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of the Cape, and of the Imperial Government, was engrossed by events which appeared to be more pressing. An agitation against British rule sprang up. But little was required to inflame the animosity of the Boers, and out of the eight thousand persons in the Transvaal entitled to vote, 6,500 entered a protest against the annexation. The conduct of Sir Bartle Frere and of Lord Beaconsfield's Government was denounced with vehemence by Mr. Gladstone, who in a speech at Edinburgh, on November 25th, 1879, spoke of "a free, European, Christian, republican community" having been shamelessly forced "within the limits of a monarchy." It is not improbable that the language of the Liberal Leader may have encouraged the agitation in favour of repeal. It is certain that Mr. Gladstone's views excited much attention in South Africa. They drew from Sir Bartle Frere a warning, which, read by the light of after events, sounds like a prophecy. "Any attempt," Sir Bartle Frere said, "to give back or restore the Boer Republic in the Transvaal must lead to anarchy and failure, and probably at no distant period to a vicious imitation of some South American Republic in which the more uneducated and misguided Boers, dominated

and led by better educated foreign adventurers, Germans, Hollanders, Irish Home Rulers, and other European Republicans and Socialists, will become a pest to the whole of South Africa, and a most dangerous fulcrum to any European Power bent on contesting our naval supremacy, or in injuring us in our Colonies."

Whether that remarkable warning was read by Mr. Gladstone is not known. But on his return to power in 1880, he seemed to have materially modified his views. Replying to the first demand made by Messrs. Kruger and Joubert that the act of annexation should be repealed, Mr. Gladstone said: "Looking to all the circumstances, both of the Transvaal and the rest of South Africa, and to the necessity of preventing a renewal of disorders which might lead to disastrous consequences, not only to the Transvaal, but to the whole of South Africa, our judgment is that the Queen cannot be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal, but, consistently with the maintenance of that sovereignty, we desire that the white inhabitants of the Transvaal should, without prejudice to the rest of the population, enjoy the fullest liberty to manage their local affairs. We believe that this liberty may be most easily and promptly conceded to the Transvaal as a member of a South African Confederation."

The Transvaal War followed. At its opening a British force of little over six hundred men was surprised on Majuba Hill, and driven back with great slaughter. General Sir George Colley and over two hundred of his men were killed. But another great change had taken place in Mr. Gladstone's opinions. He had come to the conclusion that Great Britain was not justified in retaining the Transvaal by force.

The independence which he had refused to grant before the defeat of Majuba, he now hastened to give. In carrying out a policy which he believed was a just one Mr. Gladstone was absolutely fearless. A man of smaller moral nature would have shrunk from making peace after the defeat of the Queen's troops. But, though we may think that Mr. Gladstone was utterly mistaken in his policy, there is no question that he acted with lofty magnanimity. If only on account of the magnificent spirit of generosity by which it was inspired, the settlement of 1881 ought to have succeeded. But unfortunately Mr. Gladstone's magnanimity was mistaken by the Boers for British fear. By the Convention of 1881 the Transvaal was given complete self-government under the suzerainty of the Queen, and subject to British control over the relations of the Republic with foreign States. These terms were further modified by the Convention of 1884.

With subsequent events everyone is familiar. From the first the Boers used the large measure of independence granted them, with the object of making the Transvaal a "Sovereign International State." The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, led to a large influx of British subjects and British capital, and speedily transformed the Transvaal from a weak and a poor, into a wealthy and a powerful state. Nearly the whole of the taxation of the country was paid by the new population, who were refused by the Boers any share of political power, any measure of local self-government. The Administration was both corrupt and tyrannical. The right of public meeting was interfered with; the liberty of the press was infringed; the law courts were reduced to utter servitude, by giving a simple resolution passed

by a majority of the small Dutch Volksraad all the force of law. An intolerable domination prevailed. The Government was a detestable one; and the majority of the population were held in a state of subjection and inferiority. Constitutional efforts for a redress of their grievances having failed, the Uitlanders were driven to take up arms. Before their organisation was complete the Jameson Raid took place, and after its defeat the position of the people who owned more than half the land, and at least nine-tenths of the property in the country, became more intolerable than ever. Repeated representations to the British Government, and the shooting of a British subject named Edgar, at length compelled the Imperial authority to intervene on behalf of the lives and liberties of the Uitlanders. Fruitless negotiations followed during 1899, culminating in the issue on October 9th of the Boer Ultimatum, and the immediate invasion of British territory.

The effect of these events upon the Dutch population throughout British South Africa was very serious. Before the ink with which the Convention of 1881 was written had had time to dry, an organisation known as the Afrikaner Bond was formed to drive the British out of South Africa, or to bring them into subjection to the Boers. The founders of the Bond made no secret of their aim, or how they proposed to attain it, and a study of the scheme published in 1882, shows that in all essential points it was put into execution. Mr. Lecky, M. P., the historian, who is peculiarly qualified to speak with authority on the state of feeling among the Dutch of South Africa, has stated that disaffection among the distinctly Dutch element was "formidably encouraged by the unrest of the Transvaal, by its rapidly-

growing military power, by the humiliating spectacle of the abortive efforts of England to obtain common rights for her own people. Another fact also enormously added to the danger. The surrender after Majuba was made, I believe, through perfectly honest motives, but it has been proved a great calamity to the world. Following as it did the most distinct official assurances that England would never surrender the Transvaal, or abandon the English who had settled there, it shook through the length and breadth of South Africa all confidence in English strength and resolution, and it has been one of the clearest and most undoubted causes of the present war."

There will be no repetition of the follies which have brought the war with the Transvaal upon us. To discuss upon what lines the settlement will eventually be made would be futile. But the nation is determined that ample security shall be obtained against a renewal of any similar conflict in South Africa. The independence of the Transvaal Republic and of the Orange Free State are a thing of the past, and the determination that British rule shall be supreme for the future in South Africa, no longer depends upon the shifting convictions of an individual Minister, but upon the decision of the people of the Empire, who have given all that is best and dearest to them, to put an end for ever to an intolerable menace to the peace and prosperity of the country. But the war has not been without its consolations. Under the pressure of adversity the Imperial spirit throughout the Empire has been greatly strengthened. The Colonies have rallied to the support of the Mother Country, and displayed a spirit of loyalty, enthusiasm, and self-sacrifice, which will be remem-

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bered in future centuries, and will be recalled with a flush of pride in ages to come, when the flag which is the symbol of our union and our liberties, floats over a united people, who will speak through their representatives in the Imperial Parliament of a federated Empire.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE UNITED STATES.

THE growth and progress of the United States form one of the most remarkable features of the nineteenth century. Within the period, brief in the history of nations, of a hundred years, the States, from having been one of the weakest, have become one of the greatest powers in the world, and a dominant factor in civilisation. History affords no parallel of a national growth so rapid, so romantic, and so beneficent.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century the organised Government under the Constitution had only been in existence for a little over a decade. The forces which were to control the development of the country were but imperfectly understood. Men were slowly groping their way towards the realisation of ideals, which they only dimly perceived, and of which the full significance even now can scarcely be appreciated.

The War of Independence had not been against the British as a nation, but against the rule of George III. For the first time in its history the English Parliament had ceased to command the respect and confidence of the people. The system of pocket boroughs, the narrow limits of the franchise, the secrecy of parliamentary proceedings, the laws against the press and the right of free speech, had enabled an obstinate, despotic and thoroughly unscrupulous sov-

ereign to acquire almost absolute power, and to ignore the rights of constitutional government. Under the guise of Parliamentary Government the King had become the absolute director of public affairs. Throughout the twelve years, from 1770 till the close of the American War, as Green has said, the King was in fact the Minister, "and the shame of the darkest hour of English history lies wholly at his door." *

Against this despotic rule, the Americans had successfully revolted. But although thoughts of democracy were already stirring men's minds, there was as yet no deeply rooted objection in the mass of the colonists against a monarchical form of government. It was not an improbability, in 1783, that the United States might return to some form of constitutional monarchy. The idea was more than once seriously contemplated, and Washington declined an offer of the discontented officers of the revolutionary army to make him King. The feebleness of the Government set up under the Articles of Confederation tended rather to foster than to dispel these tendencies. When it became clear that a stronger central executive was necessary to deal with the new problems with which the Confederation was powerless to grapple, and the present Constitution was adopted in 1789, American society and institutions were still essentially English.

The years between 1789 and 1800 are of profound interest to the student of American history. During that time, chiefly owing to the energy and capacity of Alexander Hamilton, the Federalists, who were in power, organised the seven great working depart-

* "A short history of the English people," by John Richard Green, page 777.

ments of the Government, which exist to-day essentially as they were first established, and which are a lasting monument to the political genius of one of America's greatest statesmen. Nor was this his only achievement. Thirty years later Daniel Webster, in speaking of Hamilton, said: "He smote the rock of the Natural Resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of Public Credit, and it sprung upon its feet."

From the conclusion of the War of Independence, two powerful forces had been at work. Having escaped after a long and desperate struggle from the tyranny of a strong central government, the first tendency was to make each Colony an absolutely independent and self-governing State. The war had been a struggle for the rights of the individual against oppression and injustice. Having fought and won their battle, the Colonies naturally placed overwhelming emphasis upon the importance of the people of each State retaining complete independence to work out their destinies untrammelled by any extraneous authority. Of this feeling the first result was the Articles of Confederation, under which the Federal Government possessed only the most shadowy powers, and was practically at the mercy of each of the States with which it had to deal. At the same time, men instinctively felt, rather than clearly recognised, the necessity of a strong central government; and from the first some of the greatest minds of the period cherished the noble ideal of a federal Union which should overcome the jealousies of the several States, and fuse the conflicting elements into one great nationality. It is significant that at the beginning of this conflict of ideas respecting the powers of the central government and the rights of each State, the

Colonies took a step which made irresistibly for nationality and union. Under the treaty of peace, of 1783, the question at once arose whether the territory outside the Western boundary of the Colonies, which had been ceded by England, belonged to the nation as a whole, or to the States to whom, while they were Colonies, the King might have granted it. The significance of the question was not recognised at the time. But it is easy to see now, that when the States having a claim to these lands gave up their rights, and the control of this splendid territory was vested in the United States as a whole, an almost irresistible impulse was given to the federal cause. This impulse was one of the forces that led to the abandonment of Confederation and to the adoption, in 1789, of the Constitution, which, happily for the United States, owing to the conflict between the two ideals of individual rights and State independence, and nationality and union, was so cautiously framed, in order to disarm hostility, that it has proved to be elastic enough to meet the demands made upon its adaptability by the changed conditions which have arisen during the past century. The Constitution is elastic, says one authority, "because the expressions used to define the powers granted by the people to the Central Government are so vague that their meaning really depends on the decision of the Supreme Court, and experience has shown that that Court will ultimately interpret the Constitution as the people wish."

Though the adoption of the Constitution gave an immense impulse to the spirit of union and nationality, it left unsolved the great question whether the United States had now become one and inseparable, or were still a confederation of States whose cor-

porate existence was dependent upon the good will of each individual member. The Preamble of the Constitution declared that "We the people of the United States" establish and ordain the Constitution; and upon the meaning and construction of those words hung the destiny of the nation. Had the Constitution been established by the people of the whole of the United States? Or had it been established by the people of each State for itself? These were the questions which first called into existence in 1793 the two parties, whose struggles to reconcile the antagonistic views were to extend over sixty-seven years, and were to culminate in a desperate and bloody war.

In the formation of these two great political parties, the French Revolution exerted an important influence. It gave the impetus needed to marshal the forces under their respective leaders. Men's minds were curiously divided on the problem of individual rights and central control. Liberty and Union appeared to be at variance. Men feared the power of the encroachments of Federal rule, because the past history of the world taught them that in government strength and oppression generally went hand in hand. In these minds, the French Revolution, with its demand for the recognition of the Rights of Man, found a ready response; and acting under this great moral impulse, what was then known as the Republican or Democratic Party, was formed under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson.

In the galaxy of great men who belong to the early days of the Union, there is no more notable figure than that of Jefferson. He was a man of lofty ideals; noble character, and generous sentiments. His sagacity as a politician excites our admiration, as

his conduct as a man compels our homage. To him, more than to any other man, the United States is indebted for the free institutions under which she has rapidly risen from small beginnings to so high a place in the civilised world. While the Colonies were still groaning under the oppression of George III, Jefferson had voiced the wrongs of his fellow-men, and had pronounced the doom of any Government which was not founded on truth and justice. After the Declaration of Independence, the original draft of which was his handiwork, he laboured incessantly for the highest ideal which has ever animated a statesman—the establishment of a government by the people, of the people, and for the people, based on truth, justice and confidence. As a thinker, as a leader, and as a ruler, Jefferson stands out more conspicuously than any of his great contemporaries, except Washington and Hamilton.

With the ideals of Jefferson and the Opposition, the Federalists had only a limited sympathy. In the party dominant up to 1800, the cry of the French Revolution awakened little or no response. To the claim of the French Republic for the assistance of the United States, Washington replied by issuing his famous Proclamation of Neutrality. On the Federal side the two great leaders were Washington and Hamilton, both men of the noblest type, of the loftiest character and patriotism, inspired by a high sense of duty and of justice. But neither of them were carried away by the democratic tendencies of their time. They were deeply imbued with English ideas and traditions, permeated by the spirit of aristocracy, and above all eminently wise, sane, practical men, upon whom had been laid the burden of bringing order out of chaos. To Washington and Hamilton,

with their calmer and broader outlook, it appeared of much more importance to secure nationality and union, based on a strong central government wielding justice for the general good, than to try to secure the rights of the individual by the erection of each State as a bulwark for individual liberty. If they had little faith in the tendencies of democracy, they shared a noble belief in the high destinies of American nationality.

With the dawn of the new century and the election of Jefferson as President, the old order began to change. The conservative force of which Washington was the embodiment had accomplished its great work, and from this time forward it began to lose its hold over men's minds. A great change also came over the beliefs of the Democratic party, which now first obtained office under the leadership of Jefferson. For a time, at least, they shook off the dread that the growing power of the Central Government might infringe the rights of the individual; and as that grim spectre faded away in the sunshine of growing expansion and prosperity, the Democratic leaders became infused with the glowing spirit and inspiring aims of the Federalists who had sought to realise the ideal of "One country, one constitution, one destiny."

During the eight years of his administration Jefferson not only recognised the value of a strong Federal Government, but pushed its powers to the very verge of the Constitutional limits. Envoys were sent to Paris to negotiate with Napoleon for the purchase of the great tract of territory forming the western part of the Mississippi basin, which had been ceded by Spain to France. Recognising the difficulty of preventing this territory from falling into the hands

of England during a war, Napoleon lent a willing ear to the envoys, and Louisiana was bought, in 1803, by the Federal Government, for some twelve million dollars. Of the sagacity that prompted the purchase there can only be one opinion, and although the step was clearly unauthorised by the Constitution, the end, in this instance, justified the means. The purchase not only strengthened the feeling of nationality, but served as a precedent, which was to be followed at every opportunity, until the limits of territory belonging to the United States stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, and the area under the dominion of the Stars and Stripes had been increased from 827,844 square miles to 3,596,500. In 1821, the difficulties with Spain over the boundary line between the possessions of the two countries, led to the purchase of Florida, thus extending the jurisdiction of the Union to the Gulf of Mexico. By the ratification of the treaty concluded in 1846 with England by Webster, the rights of the United States were recognised to the ownership of what was then known as Oregon, a vast tract which included "the present areas of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, with small portions of Wyoming and Montana." A year previously, Texas, which had shaken off the rule of Mexico in 1836, voluntarily threw in its lot with the United States, and afterwards sold to the Federal Government a large tract of territory, which now forms part of New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Between 1848 and 1853 an immense area of country was acquired from Mexico at a cost of \$25,000,000. This territory now forms the states of California, Nevada, and Utah, and parts of Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona.* Finally,—if we exclude

* Stanford's Compendium of Geography. North America,

the acquisition of territory which followed the close of the recent war with Spain—the rich, but unexplored territory of Alaska was purchased from Russia for \$7,200,000, a less amount than has been taken out of a single mine now being worked in the country. These facts enable us to realise how momentous was the step taken by Jefferson, and how large a debt his country owes to him for an act of political sagacity which required no little courage and showed his confidence in the destiny of the American people. Freed from the conflict with other powers upon her boundaries, the United States was enabled to pursue untrammelled that marvellous course of progression, which has given her a foremost place among the nations.

A strong incentive to this policy was furnished to the United States by the irritation and heavy losses caused by the wars between England and France, and the enforcement by Great Britain of her alleged right to stop and search American vessels. The Berlin and Milan Decrees of Napoleon, and the Orders in Council by which Canning tried to prevent the transfer of the carrying trade from English to neutral ships, had inflicted great hardship upon American trade. Jefferson attempted to retaliate by an embargo of trade with Europe, but after a year's trial the experiment had to be abandoned owing to the impossibility of enforcing the law, and the intense feeling aroused against the Federal Government in the New England States. In 1809, President Madison substituted an Act of Non-Inter-course with France and England for the embargo; but this was equally ineffective, and was repealed.

Vol. II., by Henry Gannett, Chief Geographer of the United States Geological Survey.

Finally, an offer that if either power would repeal its edicts, the United States would prohibit commerce with the other, was accepted by Napoleon, who promised to revoke his Berlin and Milan Decrees. In accordance with her pledge, America prohibited all intercourse with Great Britain and her dependencies. This proved a severe blow to English trade, and though the Emperor's promise remained unfulfilled, Britain protested in vain against the enforcement of non-intercourse as an unjust and hostile act. Owing to the distress caused in the United States by the long strife between England and France, America might well have exclaimed, "a plague on both your houses." Though averse to, and ill-prepared for war, the patience of the people was exhausted. The right of search enforced by England was founded on a wrong principle. It was a desperate expedient adopted by Canning to meet a desperate situation. During these years England was on the brink of industrial ruin. In addition to the right of search, the British Government further claimed the right "to seize English seamen found in American vessels; and as there were few means of discriminating between English seamen and American, the sailor of Maine or Massachusetts was often impressed to serve in the British fleet." * Had swifter means of communication then existed hostilities might still have been averted. On the 23rd of June, 1812, only twelve days after the Liverpool Ministry took office, the obnoxious orders were rescinded. Five days earlier, Congress had declared war with Great Britain. It was another example of the fatal policy of "too late."

With the varying fortunes of the war it is not our

* See Green's History of the English people, Modern England, Section IV.

province to deal. But it is impossible for any English writer to refrain from endorsing the judgment of John Richard Green, that the burning of the public buildings at Washington when the British evacuated the city, was one of the most shameful acts in our history. Another incident of the struggle was destined to have no small effect upon the political progress of the United States. By his successful defence of New Orleans, and the repulse, in December, 1814, of the British force under General Pakenham, with the loss of half its numbers, General Jackson became the darling and hero of the American nation. To what uses he turned his power will afterwards be seen. But it is curious to note that twenty-five days before Jackson's notable exploit, peace had been ratified between the two nations by the Treaty of Ghent, in which no reference was made to the English claim of the right of search and the seizure of supposed deserters from the British navy. Both nations were anxious to end a disastrous war from which neither could hope to gain material advantage, and the repeal of the Orders in Council was accepted as a tacit acknowledgment that Great Britain had abandoned the claims put forward by Canning to meet a temporary emergency. Though during the progress of the War cries of secession had been raised, there can be no doubt that on the whole the struggle made strongly for nationality, and was thus a blessing in disguise to the United States.

But the most momentous outcome of these troubles was the enunciation of what is known as the Monroe Doctrine. Though he did not possess the brilliant abilities of some of his contemporaries, James Monroe was an upright, consistent and faithful servant of his country. In 1816, he succeeded Madison as

President, and his two administrations are known as "the era of good feeling." The Monroe Doctrine was not new. But if the President did not originate it, he was the first to announce it to foreign powers as a fundamental principle of American politics. In his Message to Congress, in 1823, he laid it down as a principle that "the American Continents . . . are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonisation by any European power. . . . With the existing Colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have . . . acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States."

John Quincy Adams had previously asserted that the American continents were "henceforth not to be considered as subjects for colonisation by any European power." The reassertion of this principle in more explicit terms was called forth by a belief that the Holy Alliance contemplated undertaking the subjugation of the Spanish American States which had revolted against persistent oppression and misrule. The Monroe Doctrine undoubtedly embodied the sentiment of the people, and has become a first principle in American politics. Though its adoption marked a new departure in diplomacy, there is nothing in the doctrine, when reasonably interpreted, to which European Powers are likely to object, though its meaning has more than once been perverted to further the interests of particular politicians. But we may

trust to the good sense of the mass of the American people to prevent any serious abuse of the great powers claimed. That such a declaration was needed, was shown by the unscrupulous action of Napoleon III., who, in 1862, during the progress of the American Civil War, attempted to set up a monarchy in Mexico, under the Archduke Maximilian. It was against such flagrant acts of aggression and treachery that the Monroe Doctrine was designed to protect the United States. But it was certainly never intended to be used in the manner adopted by President Cleveland when he intervened, in 1895, between Great Britain and Venezuela in the dispute over the boundary of their territories.

The close of President Monroe's term of office marks a turning point in the political progress of the United States. From the Declaration of Independence up to 1824, progress had been both rapid and continuous. The country was now to enter upon struggles which did much to retard political development. This was due partly to the temporary break down of the party system, and partly to other causes almost inseparable from the growth of a new country. The Whigs, as the old Federalists had come to be called, were in the cold shades of opposition, with little prospect of a return to office. To all outward appearance the fundamental principle for which they had contended, the establishment and maintenance of a strong Federal Government, had been adopted by their opponents. On the other hand, a quarter of a century of almost unlimited power, had tended to demoralise the Democratic Party, which became split up into irreconcilable factions, under the leadership of John Quincy Adams, Jackson, Clay, and Crawford. The election of Adams as President was

followed by the ominous cry of corruption, now first heard in American politics. There is no reason to believe that corruption played any part in the selection of the President. It is at least certain that Adams never deigned to use the federal system of patronage to promote his own interests. In this and many other respects he was a worthy successor of the high-minded, conscientious men, who had filled the presidency before him. During his four years of office the system of a high protective tariff was extended, artificially stimulating the manufacturing interests of the New England States at the expense of the agricultural South, and accentuating the difficulties over the question of slavery.

The new forces at work, however, did not come into play until the return of General Andrew Jackson as President, in 1828. Jackson was the hero of the battle of New Orleans and of the war against the Seminole Indians in 1818. His failure to secure the presidency in 1824 had rankled in his mind. A man of great determination of character, and considerable political sagacity, he was unfortunately deficient in those higher moral qualities for which Washington and all the succeeding presidents had been distinguished. During his remarkable and brilliant career Jackson never wholly overcame the deficiencies of his early education, nor the effects of his want of moral training. To belittle a man who has rendered distinguished services to his country is an ungracious task; but it is impossible to deny that Jackson was a thoroughly unscrupulous politician. With him a deplorable element was introduced into American political life. He was the originator of the evil system known as "the spoils to the victors." Until his election the American Civil Service had borne a high

character. By one fell blow he destroyed it. To secure his return, he had promised office to everyone who worked in his interest; and upon his election he made something like a clean sweep of the Civil Service, in order to find places for his friends. From this blow the United States is only now recovering. If Jackson's education and moral training had enabled him to appreciate the far-reaching consequences of what he was doing, he would have shrunk from incurring so grave a responsibility.

Nearly sixty years were necessary to awaken the conscience of the nation to the full evils of a system under which nearly every postmaster, letter carrier, custom house officer, and innumerable other civil servants were changed with the party administration. A great awakening on this question has taken place during the last years of the century; and though the first champions of reform were representatives of Jackson's own party, both political forces are now making in the same direction. During his term of office, which began in 1885, Mr. Cleveland made the first serious attempt to grapple with the serious evils that had grown up in the Civil Service. Though the opposition against reform was almost overwhelming, the whole weight of enlightened public opinion was with the President; and the example he set has borne fruit as the years increased. The majority of the 150,000 persons in the employment of the nation are now under the protection of a Civil Service Law. "The essential feature of this law," says Mr. Gannett, "is that it requires that all accessions to the Civil Service within the classes protected by it shall be made from lists derived from Civil Service examinations, which are practically free of entry to all. The law does not in terms pro-

tect the present incumbents of the offices from discharge in the least, but by preventing the appointing power from appointing its particular favourites, it removes the principal reason for discharge, and thus indirectly protects. The enforcement of the Civil Service Law in all its aspects is in the hands of a Civil Service Commission, which is a non-partisan commission appointed by the President." * Though it is obvious that even the present state of things leaves much to be desired, a great change for the better has been effected, and the adoption of a Civil Service system absolutely independent of party influence is only a question of time.

With the introduction of the steam-engine, American life began to show its tremendous power of expansion. Manufactures increased, commerce flourished, while the National debt, which had never exceeded the relatively small amount of \$127,000,000, had been almost extinguished by 1836. But increased prosperity could not avert the great struggle which was to settle once and for all the question, whether America was to become a great nation or an agglomeration of petty states. Among many others there were two great causes which made steadily towards the crisis of 1860. Of these the first was the system of a high protective tariff adopted by the Federal Government under pressure from the Northern States, at the expense of the South. In the Northern States the manufacturing interests were predominant, in the Southern the agricultural. To maintain an equitable balance between these conflicting interests demanded the highest statesman-

* The United States by Henry Gannet, Chief Geographer of the United States Geological Survey, London, Edward Stanford, 1898, page 840-1,

ship. To foster the manufacturing interests of the North, the restrictions upon commercial intercourse with Europe became more and more severe. This policy discriminated unfairly against the South, where the staple product was cotton, for which the principal markets were in Europe. Under this pressure the Southern States, which at first had been the most strenuous supporters of the Union, gradually became arraigned against the Federal idea. Between 1789 and 1828 the mutterings in favour of secession had come chiefly from the North. The embargo laid on trade with Europe by Jefferson caused intense irritation in the New England States, and during the darkest hours of the war with England that followed, the cries of secession were renewed. But the system of protection for Northern industries produced an entire revolution. Disaffection in the South grew as rapidly as loyalty to the Federal Government increased in the North. "The tariff of abominations," passed by Congress in 1828, brought out the change in popular feeling. It was bitterly resented by the South; and though some of its more objectionable features were modified in 1832, Southerners still felt that they were being unjustly treated for the benefit of the Northern States. The result was the famous Ordinance of Nullification passed by the State of South Carolina in November, 1832, against the tariffs of 1828 and 1832, and declaring the right and intention of the State, in the event of any attempt at coercion, to withdraw from the Union, and organise a separate Government. This critical situation Jackson met with characteristic promptitude and energy. An Act authorising the President to use force was passed by Congress; but the struggle was to be postponed, and with the election of Clay

as President a bill was introduced providing for the gradual reduction, by 1842, of all higher duties, to twenty per cent. This was passed: and the South Carolina Convention repealed the Ordinance of Nullification; but the compromise satisfied neither party. For the moment the demand on the part of separate States of the right to secede was hushed, but there were other irresistible causes which were to make it break out afresh.

Up to this period the division between the two great political parties had often been more apparent than real. The Anti-Federalists, who were at first the exponents of the doctrine of the Rights of Man and the independence of each State, had not only been infected with the spirit of nationality under a strong central government, but since 1800 had steadily extended and consolidated the powers of the Federal Executive. During the first half of the century, the right of any State to secede from the Union had been denied by both Democrats and Whigs. The principle of secession met with no sympathy from Jefferson during the years of his administration; it had been ignored by his successor Madison; while, as we have seen, it was directly denied by Jackson. Had Jefferson been able to realise his ideal for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, the cry of secession would probably never have been heard again, and the nation would have escaped the calamity of the Civil War.

From the beginning of the Union, slavery had been repugnant to the moral sense of the mass of the American people. At first statesmen contented themselves with attempts to limit the evil. By the law of 1787, slavery was prohibited in the new territory north of the Ohio. In 1808 the importation of slaves was declared illegal, and it was hoped that this right-

eous step, and the growing force of public opinion, would gradually lead to a rational solution of the evil. From that time, down to 1850, the conflict between the organised forces of slavery and the unorganised anti-slavery party, raged chiefly round the question whether slavery should be sanctioned in new States admitted to the Union. Notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of a considerable section of the nation, which numbered in its ranks many of the ablest and most enlightened men of the day, the slave-owners at first got the best of the struggle. In 1812 Louisiana was admitted as a slave-state; and in 1820 the great struggle over Missouri ended in a compromise which recognised slavery in the new State, but declared that the remainder of the territory purchased from France should be free for ever. The strength of the slavery party was also largely increased by the admission of Texas within the Union in 1845, and by the compromise known as "Squatter Sovereignty," under which it was decided to allow the people of each part of the new territory acquired from Mexico, to settle the question of slavery for themselves. This marks the limits of the success of the slavery party. While their opponents had been unorganised, resistance had been fierce but ineffective. From 1839 onwards the advocates of slavery had to battle with a force which gathered strength steadily, and soon became irresistible. Though the new Free Soil or Republican Party only polled a few thousand votes at the election of President W. H. Harrison in 1839, it was soon to make its power felt. By 1848 it had become the most vital force in the Union, and the election of General Taylor, the Whig candidate, as President, was largely due to the support of the Republicans. Two years later, in 1850, in spite of

the utmost efforts of the South, California was admitted as a free State, and slavery was abolished in the District of Columbia,—the small area granted to the Federal Executive as the seat of Government. In 1854 the conflict was transferred to the territory of Kansas, where, after a desperate struggle which lasted seven years, the Republicans triumphed, and slavery was prohibited in the State on its admission to the Union.

The tension between the parties for freedom and for slavery had now reached the breaking point. But it is curious to note that during these memorable years the moral sense of the people of the Northern States was more enlightened than that of the rulers of the nation. The most conspicuous statesmen of the time, though alive to the evils of slavery, were not the leaders of the Free Soil Party. Lincoln, who was to become the saviour of his country and the emancipator of the negroes, only consented to adopt the policy of destroying slavery when he became convinced that it would be a potent force in the struggle to prevent secession. Webster, who in 1830 had declared for "liberty and union, now and for ever, one and inseparable," in 1850 supported the Fugitive Slave Law, and the admission of slave States to the Union. The guiding principle of these great men was the preservation of the Union; that slavery was doomed, both admitted, but among the wisest men of the North there was no desire to plunge their country into civil war to overthrow slavery by force, and to inflict ruin upon the slave-owners of the South. In spite of the difficulties to be overcome, men, who were able to view the situation judicially, hoped that the deeply-rooted evils of slavery might be got rid of without having recourse to violence;

and that these motives exercised great influence over a large section of the people is now unquestionable. Many of the Democrats, who supported the candidature of Buchanan for the Presidency, in 1856, were almost as strongly opposed to slavery as the Republicans; and considering the bitterness of feeling at the time, the election of Buchanan was rather an evidence of the long-suffering patience of the majority of the people, and their anxiety to do nothing to endanger the Union, than an endorsement of the principle of slavery.

It is, perhaps, idle to speculate what might have been the outcome of the struggles between the two great political parties, who had now definitely ranged themselves on the sides of freedom and slavery, if the slave-owners had not attempted to wreck the Union. It is almost certain, however, that war would have been averted. Until Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation, on the 20th September, 1862, the leaders of the Republican party had not allowed themselves to be carried away by the demands of the out-and-out abolitionists. All that the Republicans as a party were pledged to, was to oppose any extension of slavery. In this they were practically at one with the Democrats of the North. But in their eagerness to preserve their own interests, the slave-owners of the South demanded that Congress should both protect and facilitate the extension of slavery. It is a striking evidence of how completely men's minds may be warped and their moral vision distorted by party passion and self interest. The demand broke the Democratic Party in two, and assured the election of Lincoln as President. One month after his return South Carolina seceded, other slave States followed, and in February, 1861, the

"Confederate States of America" was constituted with Jefferson Davis as President.

With the events of the war we are not concerned. The conflict lasted for four years, and cost the nation over 600,000 lives, and ten billions of dollars, or over £2,061,855,000 sterling. On the 9th of April, 1865, Lee surrendered, and the war came to an end. In December of the same year, slavery was abolished throughout the whole of the United States by the thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution; and in 1868 and 1870 the fourteenth and fifteenth Amendments were passed extending the full rights and privileges of citizenship to the former slaves. "Thus a war brought on by the South for the purpose of perpetuating and extending slavery became the cause of its destruction." *

The war, we may also believe, practically settled once and for ever the vexed question whether the several States formed under the Union a political power, one and indivisible, or whether the separate States retained their sovereignty after the adoption of the Constitution. No party is ever likely again to arise in the United States to contest the principle that the whole people, or the people of all the other States, have the right to maintain or enforce the Union against any State or States desiring to secede. Nor is it likely that any serious protest will ever again be raised to the exercise of the greatly enlarged powers which the Federal Government has gradually acquired.

The assassination of President Lincoln, on the 15th of April, 1865, had a profound influence on the course of political progress. Few events have moved the nation to greater sorrow or indignation, and both

* Henry Gannett.

these feelings were shared by the whole civilised world. That within little more than a generation three Presidents should have been murdered by fanatics, forms a tragic page in the history of the Republic. But the assassinations of General Garfield and Mr. McKinley, like that of Lincoln, were devoid of political significance, except so far as they tended to deepen sympathy with the United States, and to draw closer the bond of friendship between the English and American people.

During his tenure of office Lincoln by his probity, high sense of duty, directness of purpose, sturdy common-sense, and uniform moderation, had obtained a strong hold over the confidence of his fellow-citizens. He had not only prosecuted the war with unwavering resolution, but he had displayed high qualities of statesmanship by the many efforts made to conciliate the Confederates, and to secure peace. When the war was finally brought to a triumphant conclusion, the loftiness of his nature showed itself by a generous recognition of the claims of the defeated South upon the justice and leniency of the victorious North. Had his life been spared, the United States might have averted many of the difficulties produced by the legislation of the next four years. He was the only statesman who could have controlled the violence of the contending factions, and have carried out a policy of reconstruction on wise and patriotic lines, with the least possible delay, and the largest measure of generous consideration for the South. His sturdy good sense would have enabled him to see the absurdity of supposing that seven or eight millions of educated white Americans would acknowledge the political equality of their liberated, illiterate, black slaves. All the misery, animosity, and political de-

gradation which followed the extension of the franchise to the negroes immediately after the war might have been avoided. Both consideration for a brave but vanquished party and a recognition of the expediency of proceeding slowly and cautiously in making so vast a change in the political and social organisation of the Confederate States should have deterred American statesmen from forcing an unequal equality of citizenship upon white and black inhabitants of States where there was any chance of the negroes being in a majority. Had Lincoln been succeeded by any man less pugnacious, violent, and wholly impracticable than President Johnson, the result might have been different. But in view of the difficulties created by the irrational action of Johnson and the violence of his language, Americans may justly feel proud that eventually Congress succeeded in carrying out a policy of reconstruction which readmitted all the rebellious States upon wise and generous conditions; and although the general amnesty recommended by President Grant, in 1871, was rejected, civil rights were gradually restored to the best members and natural leaders of the Southern States, which had been the prey of ignorant negroes and unscrupulous "Carpet-Baggers."

The period since the Civil War has been one rather of commercial and industrial expansion than of political progress. But it is noteworthy that in the many questions upon which the two great parties have been divided public opinion in the long run made steadily for development upon the lines of national expediency and honour.

It has been truly said that "in the enjoyment of the prosperity which results from the energy of the national character operating on unlimited resources,

the people of the United States can afford to commit, for the purposes of experiment, almost every legislative and economic blunder." But in spite of many mistakes, the material and political progress of the country has been remarkable. Political corruption is gradually though slowly being stamped out; the vital question whether the gold standard in the value of the currency was to be maintained was fought out in the elections of 1896 and 1900, and is never likely to be raised again. The absurdity of any one nation embarking upon a policy of bimetallism and the free and unlimited coinage of silver has been demonstrated; and the time appears to be within view when the United States will cease to maintain an extravagantly high tariff, which has done so much to foster the creation of gigantic trusts and monopolies. From the first the Democrats have favoured reductions in the tariff, while the Republicans have advocated a system of rigid protection. Here, as in other problems, the solution will probably be found in the happy medium. It appears improbable that the United States will adopt in the near future unlimited free trade. She would have everything to lose and little to gain by such a policy. But there is a wide difference between free trade and the vicious fiscal system which has been maintained with slight modifications during the last thirty years of the century. The scandalous abuse of the pension system is also being modified; and with the development of manufactures in the South, prosperity and contentment have returned, and the enmity engendered by the war has practically died out.

Since the close of the Civil War, two events have occurred of momentous importance in considering the political progress of the nation. Of these, the

first is the change that has taken place in the sentiment of the American people with regard to the influence which the United States should exert outside the bounds of her own territory; and the second is the war with Spain. When President Grant, in 1870, urged that Santo Domingo should be annexed in accordance with the petition of its President and inhabitants, the Senate, which unquestionably expressed the feeling of the mass of the people, refused to sanction such a policy. The dominant sentiment in the United States was strongly opposed to any extension of dominions beyond the mainland. Speaking broadly, Americans said to all other peoples, "We want none of your territory, and hands off ours and that of our neighbours." In all international disputes with which they were not immediately and materially concerned, the American people were apt to adopt the mental attitude expressed by the Scriptural formula: "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is obvious that with the growth and developments which have raised the United States to so high a place among the great nations of the world, this state of assumed indifference to what took place in other quarters of the globe could not be maintained for long. Nations have other duties to discharge besides looking after their own welfare. The moral impulse which underlies Western Civilisation, renders it more and more difficult for an enlightened people to witness with indifference what concerns the well-being of any section of their fellow-beings. And careful observers had long detected signs that in this respect a great change was coming over American feeling, and that at no distant date the United States would exert her enormous moral force everywhere and on every occasion in the interests of truth, justice, and freedom. It

was this change of national sentiment that culminated in 1898 in the war with Spain, the liberation of Cuba, the annexation of the Philippine Islands, and the acceptance of sovereignty over the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands.

Ever since its discovery Cuba had groaned under the oppressive rule of Spain. For half a century chronic insurrection had smouldered in the island, and rising after rising had been put down with ruthless brutality by Spanish troops. Remonstrances against Spanish barbarity, against the arbitrary arrest and interference with the rights of American citizens, had repeatedly been addressed to the Government at Madrid, without producing any effect. From 1870 down to the date of the Declaration of War, there was scarcely a Presidential Message to Congress that did not contain references to the troubles in Cuba, to the losses inflicted upon American trade and commerce, to the cost to the United States of enforcing its neutrality laws, and to the irritation and revulsion of feeling caused by the cruelty of the Spanish authorities. On more than one occasion it required all the influence of the Executive to prevent the recognition by Congress of the Cuban insurgents as belligerents. In 1873, the *Virginus*, an American vessel, loaded with military stores for the Cuban insurgents, was captured by the Spanish cruiser, *Tornado*, and fifty-seven of the crew were executed by order of the Governor of Santiago de Cuba, with scarcely the form of a regular trial. The incident produced a painful sensation. There can be no doubt that the use by the *Virginus* of the American flag, was unauthorised, but this was no excuse for the high-handed and savage massacre of sailors, stewards and engine-men, who were subjects of a friendly na-

tion. It was obvious that American toleration of Spanish misrule could not continue indefinitely. The United States between 1870 and 1898 displayed a forbearance that probably would not have been exercised by any other great Power.

When in February, 1895, the flame of insurrection again broke out in Cuba, the rebellion excited the warm sympathy of a large portion of the American nation. The barbarity of the 200,000 Spanish troops sent to suppress the rising, and the dogged resistance of the insurgents strongly influenced popular feeling.

During the following year the President made an effort to bring about peace through the mediation of the American Government; but the Spanish Ministry refused to consider any plan of settlement which did not begin with the unconditional surrender of the insurgents.

Under the direction of General Weyler the policy of devastation, and of concentrating the agricultural population in the towns, in order to cut off the resources of the insurgents, was pressed forward with an inhumanity unprecedented in the history of a civilised people. Over three hundred thousand people were herded into the towns, without any provision being made for their needs. They were deprived of the means of support, left without shelter or clothing, and exposed to the most insanitary conditions. "Destitution and want," President McKinley added, "speedily became misery and starvation." It is alleged that over 400,000 men, women and children perished miserably by famine or disease.

The assassination of Canovas, the Spanish Prime Minister, on August 8, 1897, led to the formation of a new Government under the leadership of Señor Sagasta. From this more liberal administration

great things were hoped. Negotiations were opened by the United States through General Woodford, who urged that immediate steps should be taken for the effective amelioration of the condition of Cuba. To these representations the Government of Spain replied by recalling General Weyler, and entrusting the conduct of Cuban affairs to General Blanco, who was empowered to bring about a settlement with the insurgents by peaceful means, if possible. To this was added a promise that the fullest autonomy compatible with the sovereign rights of Spain should be accorded to the Cubans. Though the methods of General Blanco proved to be more humane than those of General Weyler, no progress was made in the pacification of the island. The sufferings of the population were still appalling; and the promise of a liberal measure of self-government proved to be a sham. Anything more farcical than the Cuban elections, which were supposed to reflect the wishes of the people, could not be imagined. The Spanish idea of a representative assembly turned out to be a body consisting of candidates nominated by the military authorities, and approved by the Governor! With the exception of the mass of the people the Cuban legislature was no doubt representative.

Meanwhile the sufferings of the Cubans had excited warm sympathy throughout the United States. A Relief Committee was formed under the auspices of the Red Cross Society, and through its efforts, aided by the Government and the generosity of the American people, thousands of innocent people were rescued from starvation.

From the first, the Spanish Government had declined all offers of mediation on the part of the United States. Spanish officials were determined not

to yield to American pretensions to intervene in Cuba. It became necessary, therefore, for the United States to decide whether she would exert her undoubted moral rights to put an end to the calamitous state of affairs in the island, or whether she was prepared to tolerate for an indefinite period the evils against which she had protested in vain for more than a generation. At the beginning of 1898 an event occurred which made irresistibly for intervention.

Under an amicable agreement with the Spanish Government, the American battle-ship *Maine* entered the harbour of Havana on the 25th of January, and was anchored in a berth assigned by the Spanish naval authorities. The understanding was that the vessel was to remain at Havana on a friendly visit in order to protect American lives and property, in the event of any serious disturbance. There can be no doubt that the presence of an American man-of-war was bitterly resented by Spaniards in Cuba, and it is alleged that "dark threats were uttered against the ship and her crew." On the night of February 15th the *Maine* was destroyed by an explosion. Two of her officers and 264 of her crew perished, and sixty others were wounded. "The appalling calamity," as President McKinley stated in his message to Congress, "fell upon our country with crushing force, and for a brief time intense excitement prevailed, which, in a community less just and self-controlled than ours, might have led to hasty acts of blind resentment." A Naval Court of Inquiry was at once organised to report upon the destruction of the ship, and conducted its operations with the utmost deliberation and judgment. The Court found that the loss of the *Maine* was in no way due to any fault of the officers or mem-

bers of the crew, but that the ship had been destroyed by the explosion of a sub-marine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of the vessel's forward magazines. No evidence was obtainable fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the *Maine* upon any person or persons. The Spanish Government, which had expressed a genuine regret at the catastrophe, had proposed a joint investigation into the cause of the explosion. This was declined by the United States. After the examination of the wreck by the American Naval Court of Inquiry, the Spanish authorities made a separate investigation, which resulted in conclusions attributing the disaster to an accidental explosion in the forward storerooms of the ship. Between these conflicting opinions, only an expert in possession of all the facts could decide. To the ordinary mind the report of the American Naval Court of Inquiry appears conclusive; and there is only too good reason to fear that the destruction of the *Maine* was the deliberate act of a number of Spanish fanatics. Probably the truth will never be known; but it is needless to say that no one for a moment supposed that the Spanish Government had any part directly, or indirectly, in the perpetration of so dastardly and stupid an outrage. In President McKinley's message to Congress, embodying the report of the Court of Inquiry, no disposition was shown to consider the loss of the *Maine* "as more than an incident in the great issue of intervention in Cuba." But it would be futile to deny that "it was an incident of overmastering influence in hastening national decision." From that time the feeling throughout the country in favour of interference became irresistible.

In the conduct of the negotiations that followed,

President McKinley maintained a moderation and dignity of bearing which, though opposed to the extreme war faction at the time, raised him to a high position in the confidence and respect, not only of the American nation, but of the whole civilised world; a position which he held unshaken to the time of his tragic death by the hand of an assassin. The Madrid Government were warned, through General Woodford, that unless an agreement assuring immediate and honourable peace to Cuba was reached within a few days, the President would feel himself constrained to submit to the decision of Congress the whole question of the relations between the United States and Spain. To this the Government at Madrid replied by once more declining mediation on the part of the United States, and promising to make peace through the Cuban Parliament, the members of which, as already stated, were mere creatures of the Spanish military officials. On the 11th of April, 1898, the President addressed a lengthy message to Congress, in which the whole of the difficulties between the United States and Spain, about the question of misrule in Cuba, were set out with moderation and masterly clearness. Congress replied by passing a series of resolutions declaring that the people of Cuba were, and of right ought to be, free and independent; that it was the duty of the United States to demand that Spain should relinquish her authority and government in the island, and withdraw her land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters; and that the President was empowered to employ the American army and navy to give effect to these demands. Before these resolutions could become law, they required the signature of the President. This was withheld while Mr. McKinley made a last effort

in the interests of peace. But before General Woodford could lay the ultimatum of the United States before the Foreign Minister at Madrid, Spain broke off diplomatic relations.

Into the events of the war it is not necessary to enter. On May 1st, ten days after the beginning of the conflict, Admiral Dewey annihilated the Spanish fleet at Manilla—a memorable exploit. A few weeks later, the fleet under Admiral Cervera was destroyed in attempting to make its escape from the harbour of Santiago. Recognising at last the hopelessness of the contest upon which she had entered, Spain appealed to France to mediate, and preliminaries of peace were adopted on August 12th. At the Peace Commission which followed at Paris, the United States demanded the surrender of Cuba without its huge debt, and the cession of the Philippine Islands, offering Spain \$20,000,000 as a lump sum for all expenditure in betterment, and in settlement of all claims made by individuals between the two countries. These terms were finally ratified on December 10th, and Spain lost the final remnant of her once great colonial empire.

In demanding the surrender of Cuba by Spain, the United States sought no acquisition of territory. Until a stable and satisfactory form of government can be established, the island remains under American rule; but the question whether Cuba will eventually become a part of the dominions of the American nation will be left to the inhabitants to decide for themselves. The forcible annexation of the Philippines is on a totally different footing, and the United States have experienced in those islands the difficulties inseparable from an imperialist policy. Both this step, and the annexation in July, 1898, of the Hawaiian

Islands, though undertaken at the request and with the full consent of the inhabitants, have been strongly opposed by a minority of the American nation. This party disapproves of the policy of expansion, and contends that the annexation of distant islands, whether with or without the assent of the inhabitants, is not in harmony with the Constitution. While we may sympathise with this view, we doubt whether it is one that can prevail in face of the increasing competition that has sprung up between civilised nations for the trade of foreign countries, and particularly of the Far East.

In any review of the chief features of the political progress of the United States, it is necessary to touch, however briefly, upon the dominant factors which have enabled the nation to increase in population during the century, from less than five and a half to over seventy-two millions, and which have made the people the leading agricultural and manufacturing nation of the world, and an almost irresistible force in civilisation. Of these factors the most potent, undoubtedly, was the race and character of the early colonists. Until the rush to the goldfields of California in 1849, the majority of the emigrants to the United States represented the flower of the manhood of the civilised world. For nearly two centuries after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, the country continued to attract men of the stoutest hearts, the finest physiques, and often the noblest ambitions. Not only Great Britain and Ireland, but many continental countries were drained of a portion of their best manhood to feed the growth of the new nation across the seas. During those early days, before transportation had been rendered cheap, and while the ocean voyage had not been robbed of its terrors, it was generally the

strong and the brave who emigrated and the more feeble who remained at home. Out of this splendid material the American nation has been built up. From the first the Anglo-Saxon element predominated, and has succeeded in maintaining its ascendancy, assimilating in a marvellous manner other nationalities without losing its own peculiar qualities. The second momentous factor in the development of the nation was the liberty enjoyed by the individual to employ his abilities for the benefit of himself and his fellows, untrammelled by the crushing weight of the dead hand of feudalism. In spite of many political and economic mistakes, the United States afforded each man an equality of opportunity unknown until comparatively recent years in any other country. These, it appears to us, are the vital causes which have enabled the American people to accomplish such stupendous results within so brief a period. On the vast resources of the continent, containing within itself every variety of climate, a rich virgin soil, and inexhaustible wealth, it is not necessary to dwell. All these riches would have been useless without the vigorous brains and strong hands to develop them.

Though we do not imagine that the individual American has any higher moral outlook than the average citizen of other civilised countries, the moral energy of the nation as a whole is remarkable, and has enabled the people to face and to solve successfully some of the most difficult problems of modern times. This moral force, which has been the main-spring of American political sagacity, has shown itself also in the restraints placed upon Chinese and foreign pauper immigration; the treatment of the anarchical and lawless element of the population; the repression of Mormonism, which at one time threat-

ened to debase the ideal Christian life; and of recent years in the policy adopted to advance the Indians along the path of civilisation. Among many other ways in which this beneficent force has made itself felt may be instanced the effective organisation of charitable effort, the administration of poor-law relief, the advancement of education upon eminently practical lines, the promotion of civil and religious freedom, and the enlightened measures adopted for the care of the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the halt—for all those who by natural incapacity are unfitted to fight the battle of life unaided, or who in the storm and stress of the struggle have fallen by the wayside. Hitherto the enormous moral force exerted by this great people has been chiefly exercised within the bounds of its own territory. The probability that in the future it will have to be reckoned with in every part of the world foreshadows a development of Anglo-Saxon influence on behalf of progress, liberty, and the advancement of Christianity, which may become the most beneficent influence in the Twentieth Century.

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